“I WOULD PREFER NOT TO”: NONHUMAN ANIMAL RESISTANCE AND THE LANGUAGE OF SPECIESISM

by

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Abstract

Substantial scholarship on nonhuman cognition suggests that the animals we exploit are consciously aware of their own experiences, whether they be of pain or pleasure. Yet, there is a prevailing assumption that these beings are not aware of and do not resist against their own abuse, which provides convenient language for justifying the atrocities of the factory farming and animal entertainment industries. Through disingenuous public relations strategies, these industries convince the public all is well, while the animals themselves, and their agencies, are concealed from view. However, when nonhumans escape, attack, or even kill humans complicit in their domination, cognitive hoop jumping becomes evident, illustrating distinct conceptual difficulties in consolidating visibly agential actions of animals with their dominant representations as passive and disinterested in their exploitation. In this way, nonhumans' resistant actions bring to light vulnerabilities in the Western status quo's speciesist visage. Firmly situated in the field of Critical Animal Studies (CAS), my thesis engages with several case studies of nonhumans who escape captivity or attack humans to argue that not only do animals resist agentially but also that the dominant language used to represent their resistance is speciesist and must be problematized by a purposeful recognition of nonhuman agency. First, I analyze three cases of escaped cows in terms of the distancing strategies at play in the media and public response. Following, I explore the discourse of captive animal resistance by looking at the controversy surrounding Tilikum the orca and his involvement in the deaths of three humans. Ultimately, this thesis demonstrates the significance of and acts as a starting point for tracking the various distancing strategies and narratives in Western discourses on nonhuman resistance.

Lay Summary

Situated in the field of Critical Animal Studies (CAS), my thesis examines case studies of animals who escape captivity and attack humans to argue that not only do animals resist their exploitation but also that dominant representations of this resistance are disingenuous and serve to maintain justification for animal exploitation. First, I analyze three cases of escaped cows in terms of how their actions are represented in the media and public response. Following, I explore the language of captive animal resistance by looking at the controversy surrounding Tilikum the orca and his involvement in the deaths of three humans. Ultimately, this thesis demonstrates the significance of and acts as a starting point for tracking and problematizing false narratives of animal resistance.

Preface

This thesis is the original, unpublished, independent work by the author, Leah Wafler.

A previous version of a portion of this project's conclusion (Chapter 4) was presented at ACCUTE, Congress, Vancouver, BC, in 2019 under the title "Intimate Violence: Animal Resistance in John Vaillant's *The Tiger*."

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Although it cannot be said that they are cognizant of oppression in systemic terms, the animals we exploit are consciously aware of their own experiences, whether they be of pain or pleasure.[1] They are sentient individuals who, like Melville's (1855/2002) Bartleby, "would prefer not to" (p. 7) be used, whether bred, kept, caged, or killed, as humans see fit. Animals tell us this, as disability scholar-activist Sunaura Taylor (2017) observes, "every day," not only "when they cry out in pain or try to move away from our prods, electrodes, knives, and stun guns" (p. 63), but also when they act in noncompliance, escape confinement, or, in some cases, kill. In doing so, nonhumans resist agentially against confinement, exploitation, and death at the hands of humans.[2] This claim follows not only from substantial scholarship on nonhuman cognition, but also, as this thesis examines, from ubiquitous reports of nonhumans attempting to

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[1] In the biological sense, the term animal refers to both human animals and nonhuman animals; therefore, the latter term is more accurate for describing species other than human. Although I reject the massifying term "animal" because, to quote Jacques Derrida (2008), it often represents "the confusion of all nonhuman living creatures within [a] general common category" (p. 48), I will use it for sake of limiting redundancy and to acknowledge that when we speak of animals, we are largely speaking of socially constructed representations. While continued reference to the "nonhuman" may risk reinforcing a species dichotomy, therein lies the difficulty in names. However, as Briggs (2019) states, "it is not the names that matter but rather the practices of naming, where 'naming' … is always a matter of institution and power. To be sure, 'we' who call ourselves human—'we' who have seized or exploited the power to name ourselves and others—are the ones who have overseen the institution" (p. 26). While I recognize potential in further discussion, it is beyond this project's scope, as my use of the term advances from a Critical Animal Studies pursuit of "dismantl[ing] all structures of exploitation, domination, oppression, torture, killing, and power in favor of decentralizing and democratizing society at all levels and on a global basis" (Best et al., 2007, p. 2) and is thus opposed to the "seiz[ing] or exploit[ing]" of power in any way (Briggs, 2019, p. 26).

[2] This project concerns itself with nonhuman resistance in terms of violence between humans and nonhuman animals, particularly those nonhuman species who face systemic exploitation by humans. Thus, the question might be raised as to how animal on animal violence may or may not be framed as resistance. While I recognize that nonhuman interspecific violence and killing occur and are areas for future research in terms of articulating nonhuman resistance, I have chosen to focus on resistance in the context of human exploitation of animals in order to limit scope due to space constraints and because it is this relationship, from a Critical Animal Studies view, that is at "a point of crisis which implicates the planet as a whole" (Best et al., 2007, p. 1).

mitigate their "experience of oppression" (Allen & von Essen, 2018, p. 13).[3] The 2012 *Cambridge Declaration on Consciousness* provided a long overdue, formal acknowledgement of the substantial evidence indicating "unequivocally" that "all mammals and birds, and many other creatures" possess the "neurological substrates" of consciousness and "the capacity to exhibit intentional behaviors" (Low, 2012, pp. 1-2). This consensus affirms what a vast spectrum of observable animal behaviour "intuitively suggests" (Griffin, 1984, p. 461): nonhumans possess "internal representations of the world" and "concept[s] of self" that may be "markedly different" but "no less real" than our own (Noske, 1997, p. 130, 158-9), and, therefore, they are no less worthy of moral consideration.[4] Given that many species possess internal states and intentionality, affording animals agency—defined by Critical Animal Studies (CAS) scholar Aaron Moe (2014) as "conscious intention" (p. 20)—is not unreasonable. However, the definition of agency when facing the animal question remains highly debated, often becoming "a matter of choosing from a range of alternative definitional stipulations" (Steward, 2009, p. 217). Despite lacking agreement on what agency is, scholars often assume the exclusion of nonhuman animals.[5] In this regard, it is beyond this project's purview to reinvent the wheel on nonhuman agency, as CAS, with its intersections in Ecofeminism and Posthumanism, has already done so

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[3] While the plight of animals in the pet industry, labs, and other institutions that profit from the exploitation of nonhumans is germane to the question of animal resistance, it is not within the scope of this project. For inquiries into the resistance of companion animals and lab animals, see, respectively, J. Clark (2014) and Pearson (2015).
[4] Various species are said to understand abstract concepts and "fantasize and imagine things" (Noske, 1997, p. 145). Chimps, corvids, and rats know the "what," "when," and "where" of previous events (de Waal, 2016, p. 211). Elephants create coalitions with leaders (de Waal, 2016), and cetaceans form complex, long-term social relationships (Marino et al., 2007). Corvids are capable of deception, understanding cause and effect, and recognizing faces and memories associated with them (Marzluff & Angell, 2013). Research shows cooperative hunting (Bshary et al., 2006), tool use (Kuba, Byrne, & Burghardt, 2010), and individual personalities (Brockmark, Adriaenssens, & Johnsson, 2010) in fish and conscious behaviour in invertebrates that is "not so easy to explain away" (Tye, 2017, p. 156). According to Mikhalevich and Powell (2020), "the nearly wholesale exclusion of invertebrates with central nervous systems from bioethics and science policy is not justified by the current state of evidence" (p. 18).
[5] For example, see Martin and Gillespie (2010), Martin, Sugarman, and Hickinbottom (2010), and Tomasello (2008).

(see Braidotti, 2013; Birke, Bryld, & Lykke, 2004; Calarco, 2008; Lulka, 2009; Plumwood, 1993/2003; S. Scott, 2009; Warkentin, 2009). Thus, this thesis maintains, as is sustained in a CAS paradigm, the "seemingly simple," yet "profoundly radical" idea that nonhuman animals "are subjects with agency, not objects to be used as humans see fit" (Nocella II et al., 2014, p. xix).

Be that as it may, there is an "epistemic presumption" in present-day Western/ized worldviews that those beings we confine, commodify, consume, and otherwise exploit hold "no particular interest in their lives" or "will toward self-preservation" and "do not resist our utilization" (Wadiwel, 2015, p. 295). In fact, our understanding of nonhuman resistance is always already "shaped by a vast human investment" (Wadiwel, 2015, p. 204) in putting down this resistance and withholding it from public view. I am concerned here with two types of animals: the real, living, dying, and now-dead individuals who daily face the consequences of human hubris, and those we represent, the "absent referents" (C. Adams, 1990/2010, p. 6) and discursive representations of that multifarious assemblage of beings we call animals. These representations arise not from so-called established truths about nonhumans, but from a need to justify the fact, as CAS scholar Dinesh Wadiwel (2015) staunchly puts it, that "[w]e make animals suffer even though we know they suffer, in spite of their known suffering" (p. 57), and, I add, in spite of, or perhaps also because of, their resistance. Therefore, this thesis will engage with several case studies of animals who escape captivity and attack humans in order to illustrate that not only do animals resist agentially but also that the language used to represent their resistance can be analyzed and problematized by a purposeful recognition of nonhuman agency firmly situated in the project of dismantling speciesism.

To argue that animals resist domination is to encounter another form of resistance, one

that is built into anthropocentrism, namely speciesism. Anthropocentrism is the view that the human is "the sole measure of the rest of the world which fundamentally differs from" itself (Noske, 1997, p. 41). As an ideology, anthropocentrism produces what philosopher Jacques Derrida (2008) calls the "abyssal rupture" between the "*so-called*" human and the "*so-called*" animal (p. 31). The human is "distinctly non-animal," while the animal is always already "the antithesis of all that is valued and esteemed" about humanity (Noske, 1997, p. 40), begging the question of what exactly constitutes both animality and humanity, a question clearly relevant to intersectional research. Authorized by a self-declared human sovereignty and an always preceding "right to violence" (Wadiwel, 2015, p. 191), this anthropocentric view of nonhumans as "poor in world" (Heidegger, 1995, p. 185) enables their "moral disqualification" (Spiegel, 1996, p. 25), a practice grounded in speciesism. Coined by psychologist Richard Ryder (1970/2010), speciesism denotes discrimination based on species membership and constructs an image of nonhumans as indifferent to or even "willing participants" in their own exploitation, captivity, and death, thereby re-articulating their violent domination as a "natural, friendly, humane … non-event" (Wadiwel, 2015, p. 36). Humans can then proceed "business as usual" (Birkeland, 1993, p. 14) with the mass exploitation and industrialized killing of unintelligible numbers of individual, sentient beings "trapped for life in one direction" (Medoro, 2014, p. 214) as means to satisfy "relatively trivial human ends" (Balcombe, 2009, p. 215).

In Canada alone, approximately 800 million land animals were killed for food in 2019.[6]

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[6] This number, compiled from 2019 reports from the Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada website, includes 20,838,566 hogs, 3,303,879 cattle, 170,161 calves, 167,461 sheep/lambs, 66,377 goats, 748,936,606 chickens, 19,775,397 turkeys, and 6,862,312 ducks and geese (AAFC, 2021c, 2021d, 2012e, 2021f, 2021g, 2021h, 2021i, 2021j).

These numbers do not account for 150,000 tonnes of farmed fish killed (Fisheries and Oceans Canada, 2019), almost 35,000 chicks, primarily male, asphyxiated, macerated, or gassed as by-products of the egg industry (Agriculture & Agri-food Canada [AAFC], 2021a), nor number of horses slaughtered (AAFC, 2021b, 2021k).[7] On a global scale, these numbers reach well into the billions annually[8]—not including the more than 115.3 million animals exploited in laboratories each year (K. Taylor et al., 2005, p. 329),[9] nor those living in an estimated 12,000 zoos and aquariums worldwide or pacing endlessly in hellish roadside zoos and tourist attractions (Catibog-Sinha, 2008, p. 161).[10] To account for the pet industry, farmed and free-living animals killed for their fur or skin, and those killed under guise of conservation or trophy hunting, the total grows to an unfathomable number of lives created, prolonged, and ended for human benefit. I hesitate to consolidate individual animals into such nebulous figures, but these sums viscerally demonstrate who is at stake in this question of animal resistance. Indeed, it is the "massification" of nonhumans, as C. Adams (2016) defines, that "allows our release from empathy," whereby "the more of a mass they become, the less concern they need provoke" (p. 6).

My motivations for this project can be best illustrated by understanding what the field of Critical Animal Studies, where I locate my work, sets out to do. CAS is a growing interdisciplinary, intersectional, and abolitionist coalition of scholars and activists that advocates

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[7] In 2018, the Canadian Horse Defence Coalition, alongside animal rights lawyer Rebeka Breder, filed a lawsuit against the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (Canadian Horse Defence Coalition, 2021).
[8] Global annual estimates are around 80 billion animals (Ritchie & Roser, 2017/2019), but very widely and often focus solely on "mainstay" species: cows, pigs, sheep, goats, and poultry. The number of chickens alone makes up for almost 68 billion of this estimate (Ritchie & Roser, 2017/2019). Where some animals' deaths are counted only by weight, the number of individuals, no matter how large or small, is clearly higher than available estimates.
[9] This number is an extrapolation based on 2005 data from the countries that publish their statistics on animal use: Australia, Canada, the European Union, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the United States.
[10] The difficulty in tracking down more recent sources, or an estimate for the number of zoo animals, illuminates the unintelligibility of such a large number and desires for it to remain so.

a '"critical' approach" to the lives of animals through both theory and activism (Best et al., 2007, p. 1). In fact, CAS maintains that human-animal relations are "at a point of crisis which implicates the planet as a whole" (Best et al., 2007, p. 4). The collaboration between theory and action is key to the CAS doctrine, as CAS opposes not only "the physical exploitation, torture, and murder of nonhuman animals," but also "the theoretical analytical dissection of nonhuman animals, which is not concerned with their oppression" (Nocella II et al., 2014, p. xxiv).[11] This project aims to contribute to the growing field of scholarship in CAS, which seeks to engage in non-violent, compassionate, and ethical forms of relating to nonhuman animals that categorically reject false conceptions of "the human" and "the animal." Considering this potential to effect positive change for nonhuman animals, it follows that recognizing their agency and resistance is central to the project of total liberation.

The systemic denial of nonhuman agency is not, as it has long been imagined in the Western scientific and philosophical tradition, a "careful, neutral," (Weston, 1991, p. 5) and necessary skepticism. Rather, in the face of evidence, this denial is a tactful "dementaliz[ation]" (Bastian et al., 2012, p. 253) normalized to the extent that it allows humans to rationalize the treatment of nonhumans as objects while simultaneously undergoing a mass "forgetting or misunderstanding of this violence" (Derrida, 2008, p. 25). Recalling the Cartesian view of animals as "natural automata" (Descartes, 1649, as cited in Cottingham, 1978, p. 553), a contemporary scientific culture of denial valorizes this ruthless skepticism, wherein attributing to nonhumans consciousness, intentionality, and thus agency to nonhuman animals is denounced as

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[11] The term "murder" is largely excluded from dominant discourses on nonhumans as it engenders an ethical response inconsistent with the wholesale acceptance of animal slaughter in an anthropocentric paradigm. The use of the word "murder" here is thus a purposeful discursive act that rejects the sanitizing, anethical language of "euthanize," "dispatch," or "harvest."

"rampant anthropomorphism," "wishful thinking" (Dawkins, 2012, p. 175), "folk-psychology" (Wynne, 2007, p. 134), "a drag on … scientific study" (Kennedy, 1992, p. 5), a "dangerous pit" (Breland & Breland, 1966, p. 3), and even a "cardinal crime" of intellectual inquiry (Broadhurst, 1963, p. 12).[12] Moreover, as CAS scholar Dana Medoro (2014) argues, there is an increasingly apparent "entwining" (p. 209) of academic, governmental, public, and private interests with those of the industries and corporations that profit from animal exploitation. These "partly opaque and multiple sets of networks and relationships" (Twine, 2013, p. 89) can be understood in terms of Noske's (1997) "animal-industrial complex" (AIC) (p. 22). As CAS scholar Richard Twine (2013) elaborates, the AIC encompasses the "economic, cultural, social, and affective dimensions" of "an extensive range of practices, technologies, images, identities, and markets" (p. 91) that tacitly agree to obscure "ad infinitum"' (Medoro, 2014, p. 209) the cruelty, force, and violence required to transform, under the guiding hand of capitalism, living animals into commodities. The result is an "entirely false image" (Medoro, 2014, pp. 209-10) of the other "we call animal" (Derrida, 2008, p. 10), wherein any "capacity for violence of the other" has been snuffed out and, along with it, all suspicion that "this other" might resist human control and return this violence (Wadiwel, 2015, p. 295).

Nonhuman resistance, as I will explore in detail in the coming chapters, "must be continually respond[ed] to" (Wadiwel, 2015, p. 15) on both a physical and ideological level, which can be understood in terms of Althusser's (1971/2006) repressive and ideological apparatuses. More specifically, these "multifarious and heterogeneous" spaces and discourses in

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[12] On the contrast, Bekoff (2000) affirms anthropomorphism's potential, arguing that by "engaging in anthropomorphism" can help "humans make other animals' worlds accessible to themselves" (p. 867). Through "biocentric anthropomorphism," Bekoff (2013) sees the potential for human language to allow us reflect critically on an animal's point of view, behaviours, and emotions (p. 63).

which human and nonhumans "interact, support, and conflict with one another in a multitude of different, and mutually constitutive, ways" constitute what Stephen Thierman (2010) calls the "apparatus of animality" (p. 92), a concept borrowed from Foucault. In order to maximize profits, increase production speed, and reduce product loss (or rather, limit the number of injured, dead, or "useless" animals), the repressive apparatus of the factory farm, slaughterhouse, zoo, or aquarium responds to and thus acknowledges nonhuman resistance by way of various technologies of control and deception that extract from nonhumans a superficial "consent" (Margulies, 2018, p. 184). The ideological apparatus then eradicates any knowledge of this resistance, and of the violence of its repression, under a "veneer of peaceability" (Wadiwel, 2015, p. 13). These industries seek to conceal the well-documented truth of animal suffering and cruelty, a truth that animal resistance constantly threatens to expose.[13] There is no doubt that not all animals can resist—many may seem simply unable due to the AIC's measures to pre-empt resistance. The question of resistance appears unaskable when an animal's movement is severely limited, as it is for sows in gestation crates or hens in battery cages. The deceptions orchestrated by these institutions are not only in terms of manipulating public perception (see Tallberg & Jordan, 2021), but also in terms of deceiving nonhumans themselves. Deception is necessary to avoid animals resisting; the tactics of industrial slaughterhouses, for instance, include limiting views of "escape routes" (Grandin, 1994, p. 7) and using music to drown out "noisy equipment" (Grandin, 1980, p. 48) and to "prevent the alarm call" of one animal "from creating a disturbance throughout the entire group" (p. 48).[14] By deceiving the nonhumans they exploit, these

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[13] For examples of animal cruelty in these industries, see Hosie (2017), Fobar (2019), and McSheffrey (2017).
[14] Grandin's suggestion to use music in this way contrasts later claims that "vocalization in both cattle and pigs is correlated with physiological measures of stress" and that it is "a simple way to identify problems with excessive

institutions acknowledge that the animals in these spaces are aware and even have the forethought to resist. However, through careful public relations strategies, anti-whistle blower laws, claims of animal welfare, conservation, humane slaughter, and even so-called "happy meat" (Cole, 2011, pp. 93-4), these industries convince the public all is well, while the animals themselves, and their agencies, are concealed from public view when sequestered *en masse* in industrial feedlots, slaughterhouses, cages, or concrete enclosures.[15] What prevails is an illusory truth of animal indifference in the face of exploitation—a seamless "façade," absent of all "hostility" or "friction" (Wadiwel, 2015, p. 16).

At the conclusion of his treatise *The War against Animals*, Wadiwel (2015) argues that "by tracking and narrating animal resistance," scholars "might very well begin a project of undoing the epistemic violence of the war against animals" that beckons "the prospect of human disarmament" (p. 296). Be that as it may, I argue that this undoing must first attend to the distancing strategies and obfuscating language that actively seek out and cover over even the subtlest levels of nonhuman resistance. Otherwise, as I will show, this proposed narration of nonhuman resistance will almost certainly be once again co-opted into speciesist narratives that rid the animals of their agency and thus any potential for affecting significant change. By way of analysis-driven discussion, this project intends, as Wadiwel (2015) puts it, to "understand the 'truth' of animal resistance" (p. 296) by locating, analyzing, and exposing the "tight system of

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prod use or other problems with equipment or handling" (Grandin, 2001, p. E242; see also Grandin, 1998). The masking of vocalization with music or sound would serve only to quiet a clear indicator of abuse and eliminate the spread of unrest to other animals. It also appears that Grandin (1980) may have the resistance of individual animals and the potential for it to occur on a group level in mind, remarking that the diffusion of "disturbance through the entire group" is an issue to be pre-emptively addressed (p. 48).

[15] For instance, Bill 156, *Security from Trespass and Protecting Food Safety Act* (2020) passed in Ontario, imposing harsh penalties for those who "trespass" or "interfere" with goings-on of any animal processing facility or process.

euphemisms" that has long convinced us to "not believe our eyes" when it comes to the agency of nonhumans (Medoro, 2014, pp. 208, 213). When individual animals escape, attack, or even kill humans complicit in their domination, a series of contradictions, tensions, and cognitive hoop jumping become evident.[16] These instances illustrate distinct conceptual difficulties in consolidating what are plainly visible agential actions of nonhuman animals with the dominant image of nonhumans as passive, disinterested, or even cooperative in their exploitation. In this way, the resistant actions of nonhumans bring to light vulnerabilities in the speciesist visage of the Western status quo. That is to say, when confronted with animal noncompliance, humans are provoked to consider what it might mean if nonhumans resist. What if humans have indeed, as John Norris (1701) pondered, "err[ed] in the Dark" (pp. 99-100) when it comes to the power of the animal other? What does it mean to human subjectivity if an "animal claims the life and death power over" a human (Wadiwel, 2015, p. 271)? What if that "animal is victorious" (Wadiwel, 2015, p. 271)? These questions are clearly provocative in terms of not only our understanding of nonhumans, but also what it means to be human.

However, while scholars have taken up this call and have begun to narrate resistance "from below" (Hribal, 2010, p. 29), there remains a gap in research regarding the various ways that nonhuman resistance is already spoken about at length, albeit in roundabout ways, and what

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[16] Bruce Bagemihl's (1999) "anything but sex" argument showcases how researchers use convoluted and inaccurate language to explain away animal behaviour incompatible with the status quo "even when it involves the most overt and explicit of activities" (Anything but Sex section, para. 1). Bagemihl argues that in order to "avoid classifying same-sex activity [of animals] as 'homosexuality,'" researchers use "terminology and behavioral categories that deny it is sexual activity at all," including classifying "homosexuality as dominance or aggressive behavior, as a form of play, as a social interaction that relieves group tension, and as a greeting activity" (Anything but Sex section, para. 1). Bagemihl asserts that, "in many cases, these 'explanations' are not so much genuine attempts to understand the phenomenon as they are ways of denying its existence in the first place" and that "these interpretations are simply incompatible with the facts" (Anything but Sex section, para. 1).

role this dominant discourse on animal resistance has in upholding and maintaining speciesism. While I seek to make the case that the narration of nonhuman resistance can problematize and expose the ethical blindness that is speciesism, I am concerned with how narrating nonhuman resistance, even from a "pro-animal" perspective, may risk reproducing the language of speciesism.[17] This concern arises because, as I have said, the resistance of animals is already recognized and foreclosed by the very systems that exploit them in order to create more frictionless technologies of exploitation. Therefore, this thesis seeks to demonstrate the significance of and act as a starting point for tracking and problematizing the various distancing strategies and narratives in Western discourses on nonhuman resistance. The goal is to then consider how this resistance might be narrated in a way that "rupture[s] epistemic violences" (Wadiwel, 2015, p. 296) as opposed to inadvertently reproducing the logic that underpins them.

1.1 Resistance literature

Although the exact meaning of "resistance" is highly debated,[18] Hollander and Einwohner (2004) suggest there are two common elements, "action" and "opposition," in "nearly all uses of the term" (p. 528). Be that as it may, definitions often emphasize behaviour seen as quintessentially human, referring to the "challenging" of "ideologies" (Weitz, 2001, p. 670), "conscious questioning" (Brown, 1994, p. 167), and "consciousness, collective action" (Rubin, 1996, p. 245).[19] Thus, despite the common threads of "action" and "opposition," qualities not generally withheld from nonhumans, resistance is largely seen as inextricable from the seemingly uniquely human trait of agency and related qualities of "self-hood, motivation, will,

[17] For instance, see Greer's (2006) comment in Section 1.1.
[18] See Holland and Einwohner's (2004) review on the debate over the term resistance as it applies to humans.
[19] These sources are all cited in Holland and Einwohner (2004)'s review.

purposiveness, intentionality, choice, initiative, freedom, and creativity" (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998, p. 962). Therefore, because it is often aligned with capacities seen as uniquely human, the term resistance shows little use in dominant discourses on nonhumans, even in pro-animal rights discussions.

For instance, in his pivotal text *Animal Liberation*, Peter Singer (1975/2009), who is considered to be the founder of the animal liberation movement, states that humans must act altruistically to end animal exploitation because "animals themselves are incapable of demanding their own liberation, or of protesting against their condition with votes, demonstrations, or boycotts" (p. 356). While a number of studies show that nonhumans do in fact vote, make collective decisions, or reach consensus in species-specific ways (Bousquet, Sumpter, & Manswer, 2011; Conradt & List, 2009; Cronin, 2012; da Cunha & Byrne, 2009; King & Sueur, 2011; Seeley, 2010; Sueur, Deneubourg, & Petit, 2010),[20] there is difficulty, as Meijer (2017) argues, in mapping these behaviours onto "existing mechanisms in liberal [human] democracies, such as voting" (p. 217). Thus, Singer's second claim appears objectively true as nonhumans are not able to "protest" in this conventional "human" sense—however, such a view not only discounts nonhuman agency, but also assumes that resistance must necessarily be viewed from an already narrow perspective of how humans protest and demand liberation. In the study of human resistance, much attention is paid to grandiose shows of resistance, such as "organized, large-scale, protest movements" (J. C. Scott, 2008/1987, p. xv). This view is not surprising considering, as anthropologist James C. Scott (2008/1987) states, "[e]veryday forms of resistance

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[20] Many species, including gorillas, African elephants, swans, honey bees, and capuchins, show specific "'voting' behaviours," including posturing, movements, and vocalizations (Conradt & Roper, 2003, p. 155). Vote counting also occurs wherein decisions are made based on meeting certain thresholds, including majority, mean, and intensity of the behaviour (Conradt & Roper, 2003).

make no headlines" (p. 36). Yet, everyday resistance works in less obtuse ways; as J. C. Scott suggests, there is a "hidden transcript" of resistance in subordinate groups where expression of "real" resistance is improbable (p. 4). If resistance in humans is not limited solely to so-called spectacular actions, rejecting the possibility of animal resistance based on their inability to resist spectacularly must be seen as an error grounded in speciesism. As Meijer (2017) states, "for political participation nonhuman animals do not need to be able to represent themselves in human language in courtrooms or political settings; there are many ways in which forms of deliberation already takes place" and that "speaking with them and listening to what they have to say is the first step in this process" (pp. 220, 224). Thus, by approaching from a standpoint that does not hinge upon the illusory, hierarchical separation of human and animal, nonhumans can be seen to resist both quietly and, indeed, to resist spectacularly.

Nevertheless, there is generally little consensus on what to call it when animals react to humans in violent, disruptive, or noncompliant ways. Some say these actions are accidental, such as Siegfried Fischbacher's view of the attack on his partner Roy Horn by a performing tiger. Fischbacher claims it was purely accidental because if the tiger, Mantecore, wanted to kill Roy, it would have happened "in no time" (Massarella, 2016, para. 360). These actions could be motiveless: animals, like Mantecore, might snap, act upon instinct, or are, in the very sense of their name, acting "*like an animal*" (Derrida, 2008, p. 44). Historically, treating animal behaviour as instinctual has been the norm, with researchers referring to "innate" and "instinctive energy," "tension and discharge," and "spontaneous aggression" (Conti, 2019, p. 353). This biologized, even mechanized, language negates the possibility of animal actions having intention—rather, an "accumulation of nervous energy" drives them to "perform a certain action" (Conti, 2019, p. 353). The result is the animals "appear mindless" and "the conceptual space for a tacit or explicit

attribution of mentality drastically shrinks" (Crist, 1999, p. 204). In contrast, language that considers nonhumans as subjects and agents recognizes "the animal world as a place of knowledge, emotion, intention, thinking, and memory" (Crist, 1999, p. 202).

Some call these noncompliant actions "revenge"—feminist Germaine Greer (2006) responds to the death of Steven Irwin, "the Crocodile Hunter," by stating that the "animal world has finally taken its revenge" (para. 9).[21] This trope of animal revenge is most common in popular media, used to provoke fear in human audiences (Gregersdotter, Höglund, & Hållén, 2016; Hallam, 2020; Simpson, 2010) by representing animals as "sadistic monsters [who] are vehicles and vectors of the uncanny" (Giblett, 2009, p. 18). Nonetheless, revenge is spoken of widely in contemporary evolutionary and behavioural research on nonhumans (see Aureli et al., 1993; McCullough, Kurzban & Tabak, 2013). Even Darwin (1871/2008) speaks of "artful revenge of various animals" who "rejoice[] and triumph[]" over seeing their "victim[s]" (p. 40). What is recognized as retaliation is common amongst many species (see Aureli et al., 1992; Bshary & Bshary, 2010; Clutton-Brock & Parker, 1995; Hoover & Robinson, 2007; Silk, 1992), and some scholars even speak to vengeance and spite specifically (see Jensen, Call, & Tomasello, 2007; Jensen, Hare, et al., 2006). While de Waal (2016) states that aggression in macaques "resembles revenge" (p. 181), he appears leery of making outright claims that could be viewed as anthropomorphic, which is understandable given that revenge is often considered to be a strictly human quality. For instance, Seton (2011) argues that revenge behaviours "may appear to be the same as in people, but for animals, there are strict rules; patterns of response to defined

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[21] Greer's use of the term revenge is figurative, as the stingray involved in Irwin's death was free-living and there is no suggestion the animal had a specific history of oppression by Irwin or other humans. In this regard, for Greer (2006), the stingray is merely a representative (and a representation) of an abstracted "animal world" (para. 9), as opposed to an individual who sought retribution.

transgressions are inborn and circumscribed" (pp. 79-80). In a general sense, definitions of revenge do not necessarily exclude animals: "the action of hurting, harming, or otherwise obtaining satisfaction from someone in return for an injury or wrong suffered at his or her hands" (Oxford University Press, n.d.-c, para. 1). However, to see this definition as including nonhumans also requires seeing them as "someones," which is exactly what speciesism demands of us not to do. Nevertheless, while revenge may attest to a sense of motivation on the part of an animal, as well as the dramatic, violent, or mischievous nature of the event, it does not sufficiently attest to moments of noncompliance, avoidance, refusal, or escape.

Even in scholarship that seeks to understand nonhuman animals in their own terms, there is an apparent unease in speaking of animal resistance. Philo (1995), whose work explores the active roles nonhumans play in human-animal relations, highlights his concern with the term "resistance" because he believes it "borders on attributing 'agency' and 'intentionality' to animals in a manner normally only reserved for human beings" and thus may "risk being anthropocentric" (p. 656). Philo hesitantly offers the words "agency," "will," "intentionality," only to withhold them and instead calls these moments "transgression" (p. 656). In *Animal Spaces, Beastly Places*, Philo and Wilbert (2004) postulate that "animals themselves … inject what might be termed their own agency into the scene, thereby transgressing, perhaps even resisting, the human placements of them. It might be said that in so doing the animals begin to forge their own 'other spaces'" (p. 13). The hesitancy to outright claim resistance continues here through hedging language: "what might be termed," "perhaps even," and "might be said" (Philo & Wilbert, 2004, p. 13). I dispute Philo's reasoning for exchanging resistance with transgression, as he argues that *both* terms raise "questions as to whether it is appropriate to conceive of transgression or resistance occurring in a situation where the parties involved—in this case

animals and humans—seemingly cannot even begin to share the same systems of (political) meaning" (Philo, 1995, p. 656). Following Philo's logic that nonhumans do not share an understanding of laws or duties, transgression as a term to describe animal action is cursory at best—and speciesist at worst. If we consider the basic definition of resistance, "the action of resisting, opposing, or withstanding someone or something" (Oxford University Press, n.d.-b, para. 1), such a term is well suited for describing animal action and evading the question of political meaning Philo is concerned with. Speciesism is certainly being transgressed when we recognize nonhumans to be acting in noncompliance. However, the term transgression falsely assumes the violation of agreed upon rules, while resistance does not imply that informed consent is in any way possible for nonhumans being exploited.

In contrast, increasing numbers of scholars are attending to the link between agential acts and the potential for resistance in nonhumans. For instance, Carter and Charles (2013) make the case for applying both the terms agency and resistance to nonhuman animals, stating that the "ability to act—to run away, to become refractory to handling … is regarded as evidence that a being has agency. It is not difficult to see how this exercise of agency can readily be interpreted as resistance, that is, as an unwillingness to accept one's immediate conditions" (p. 328). As one of the only accounts of its kind, Jason Hribal's (2011) *Fear of the Animal Planet* stands as an oft-cited text in discussions of animal resistance (e.g. Almiron, 2016; Carter & Charles, 2013; Cohen, 2016; Dietz & York, 2015; Meijer, 2016; Pearson, 2015; Stallwood, 2018; Wadiwel, 2018). Hribal's (2011) text helps rewrite a false, anthropocentric history of captive animals that denies their agency and reduces their resistance to "instinct," "wild[ness]," or an "accident" (p. 24). However, the text overall reaches minimal critical depth, likely due to being aimed at a popular audience and focusing almost exclusively on animals considered to be "charismatic

species" (Albert, Luque, & Courchamp, 2018, p. 2). The issue with focusing on this cohort is that these species already elicit more compassion, empathy, concern, and acknowledgement of their agency than "the non-charismatics" (Hosey, Melfi, & Ward, 2020, p. 419). Further yet, "fear of the animal planet" itself plays a significant role in the public's interest in these species. As Schroeder (2018) states, "opportunities are all the more valuable when … contact is made with species that are otherwise considered wild, untamed, and dangerous" (p. 31). In this regard, Hribal's narrow account risks replicating a speciesist privileging of certain species over others and encouraging the fearful curiosity of a thrill-seeking public. Ultimately, while Hribal's text contributes to the archive of animal resistance accounts that Wadiwel (2015) highlights, we must not forget that "the apparatus learns" (Chrulew, 2018, p. 26) and that each telling of resistance exposes itself to the obfuscating powers of speciesist discourse.

There is a need to address the context in which we are narrating this resistance, as the tracking and limiting of nonhumans' resistance is already being done—even down to a cellular level[22]—by the very systems that exploit them. As Derrida (2008) states, "traditional forms of treatment of the animal have been turned upside down by the joint developments of zoological, ethological, biological, and genetic forms of knowledge, which remain inseparable from techniques of intervention into their object, from the transformation of the actual object" (p. 25). In other words, the treatment of animals, as Chrulew (2017) suggests, is also "an exercise in the production of knowledge about *animal subjects*, knowledge that relies upon and in turn helps produce and refine technologies of power over those animals" (p. 222). Zoos not only surveil their animals through accumulating data but also create perfect subjects of surveillance by

[22] Chapters 2 and 3 both discuss the role of animal resistance in guiding the choices humans make in terms of breeding nonhumans.

"reproducing animals that embody certain genetic and demographic traits," marking "a new form of managing evolution" (Braverman, 2012, p. 129). In regards to industrial animal agriculture, this transformation is reaching a point of totality with the likes of *in vitro* meat and,[23] most literally, the creation of so-called mindless animals via genetic "disenhancement" (Henschke, 2012, p. 56), wherein nonhumans are genetically modified in ways that "eliminate the sensitization that occurs as a result of painful or traumatic experiences," a move that Shriver (2009) supposes would leave animals "still be better off than they are now" (p. 118). However, this notion of "better off" depends on the assumption that such tactics reduce or eliminate suffering as opposed to simply creating suffering of a different kind. Further, it is unclear how the genetic lobotomizing of future nonhumans in any way counteracts the suffering of their contemporaries, as both are brought into being to be exploited in spite of whether they can feel pain or not. In the case of both *in vitro* meat and disenhancement, the animal body becomes the site of redress for the problems of animal agriculture, wherein "what is wrong with the factory farm system is not the system of treating living being as machines, but, instead the animals themselves who have failed to become enough like machine" (Stanescu & Twine, 2012, p. 9). While both of these supposed alternatives to factory farmed meat suggest that the purpose is to eliminate animal suffering, this abstraction and fragmentation turns nonhumans into "dissociated semi-living matter" and promotes an "illusion of a victimless existence" (Catts & Zurr, 2013, pp. 112, 107), which further distances the living animals from the products of their exploitation. Whether humans seek to satisfy their desire to consume other animals by raising and killing them or by making them live as genetic hosts so their bodies can be mutilated and harvested, the

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[23] Companies such as Mosa Meat, Memphis Meats, and Finless Foods create cultured, lab-grown meat using animal cells. According its website, Mosa Meat's goal is to create "the world's kindest beef burger" (Mosa Meat, n.d.).

process of exploitation is present; the difference between slaughter and *in vitro* meat or genetic disenhancement is that there is simply "a few more technological steps" (Catts & Zurr, 2013, p. 112) in creating a docile and productive body "that may be subjected, used, transformed, and improved" (Foucault, 1975/2012, p. 136) as a means to human ends.

What do we risk in telling this "history from below" when the knowledge of this resistance is a tool for exploiting animals in even more efficient, frictionless ways? If agency and resistance is suppressed or, as Montford and Taylor (2020) put it, "crippled" (p. 147) purposefully and often so completely in the industries that exploit nonhumans, it is not difficult to see how conceptions of resistance and agency such as Hribal's lead us only to attending to that which "make[s] … headlines" (J. C. Scott, 2008/1987, p. 36). Further, Hribal is himself ostensibly complicit in this "crippling." As critical disability studies scholar Sammy Jo Johnson (2020) argues, Hribal demonstrates animals' agency by distancing their actions "from disability and madness," and thus supports "dominant narratives … that position the disabled body as incompatible with conceptions of agency" (p. 66). For Johnson (2020), Hribal's conception of agency locates disability "as the conclusion of a life spent resisting" (p. 65), wherein any such "pitiful" animal is "in no condition to retaliate" (Hribal, 2011, p. 44). Hribal's text therefore illustrates the difficulty in escaping from both ableist and speciesist logics. The overall issue is, as this project will show, that headline-making resistance is subject to public relations strategies and is thus often implicated in upholding speciesist discourse, as opposed to dismantling it. In this regard, to bring into question the logics of domination that underpin animal exploitation, we must not only consider the moments when resistance is overt, but also recognize the possibility of domination so complete that resistance appears imperceptible.

Most notably, work on animal resistance and its ethical importance has come from

scholars in CAS. Colling (2018) argues that resistance "entails the desire to be free from captivity, violence, and suffering that occurs in systems of oppression and domination" and as such, this definition can apply to "both humans and other animals" (p. 26). Wadiwel (2015) investigates the question of animal resistance without hesitation, contrasting earlier scholarship's tendency to move past the "question" without decisively addressing it. In response to the ongoing debate over whether fish can feel pain, for example, Wadiwel (2016) chooses to examine instead whether they can resist, a question that offers "a different model for considering political agency" (p. 200). Rather than applying normative understandings of human agency, Wadiwel argues that fish resistance is illustrated through technologies of the fishing industry itself that "aim precisely to counter and put down resistance" (p. 213). As these tools arise in direct response to their actions, Wadiwel proposes that fish can be thought of as "co-creators (often unwilling co-creators) of the world we live in" (p. 221). This notion of unwilling co-creation carries weight in relation to other forms of animal exploitation. For instance, industrial slaughter technologies, such as stunning boxes and squeeze chutes, are responses to animals resisting in their final moments of life (see Chapter 2), while zoos and aquariums respond in terms of enclosure designs and behavioral modification (see Chapter 3).

In a similar approach to Wadiwel, J. Clark (2014) argues that animals are not simply "the means of production," but are also active participants or "labourers" (p. 140). However, in terms of their ability to resist, J. Clark notes that nonhumans are often "subjected to relations of domination that render resistance futile" (p. 160). Likewise, Kowalczyk (2014) questions whether animals can be seen as "part of the working class" (p. 184), stating that while "resistance cannot simply overthrow the power exercised by capital over non-human animal … these kinds of acts of resistance may refocus the debates on the role played by non-human animals in the

capitalist mode of production" (p. 195). Marxism appears to be a valuable approach in conceptualizing nonhuman resistance, particularly in terms of, as Beldo (2017) discusses, the "fundamentally distinct kind[s]" of "intensive metabolic and reproductive labour" that nonhumans perform (pp. 118, 120); while not within the scope of this project, I point to an avenue for further inquiry into what resistance to these particularly forms of nonhuman labour might look like. However, the consensus is that conceptual work remains to be done in the application of Marxist theories to nonhumans (J. Clark, 2014). Beldo's (2017) commentary on the topic illustrates my concern with Marxist theories, where he states that "labor gives us a register to eventually talk not just about exploitation and dispossession but also compensation. … if the exploitation of metabolic labor is to continue, perhaps it ought not be so utterly thankless" (p. 145). I find it difficult to entertain the question of compensation not only because I am calling for the end of animal exploitation, but also because the notion of compensation is very much already a part of the discourse of animality. Nonhumans are often imagined as being "compensated," for giving up their lives, freedom, and agency for human benefit, with food, safety, veterinary care, shelter, conservation, and so on—there is even a popular, albeit logically incoherent argument against veganism that suggests farmed animals would go extinct if humans stopped consuming meat and are therefore doing them a service by eating them (Colb, 2013).[24]

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[24] As John Sanbonmatsu (2014) states, "critics maintain that animals trapped in the system of human agriculture—beaten and branded, sexually violated, then killed at a fraction of their possible natural lifespans—are *better off* than they would be if left to their own devices in the wild" and that "virtually identical sets of ready-made arguments are at hand for defending" other forms of animal exploitation such as "zoos," "hunting," "vivisection … and so on" (p. 37). Sanbonmatsu refers to this "recent iteration" of "humane" discourse as a form of "bad faith":

> The fact that one encounters the same catechism of banalities and clichés again and again, each presented as a precategorical "truth" … is indicative of speciesism's status as a totalizing ideology, a self-contained system of signs capable of framing the individual's every encounter with the world. With a wink and a smile our antagonist appears to be in intellectual earnest, but isn't. The speciesist knows deep down, and not only deep down, that his arguments are ill thought out, made without genuine moral seriousness. Or

CAS scholar Zipporah Weisburg (2009), speaking of lab animals in particular, criticizes these theories because these animals are "not workers—not even alienated workers—but worked-*on* objects" and referring to them otherwise "is to gloss over the brutal reality of the total denial of their ability to act in any meaningful way—namely, as self-determining *subjects*" (p. 37). While seeing nonhumans as labourers might attribute to them some sense of agency, it remains that the justification for making these animals "work" relies precisely on the denial of their agency. Theorizing nonhumans as labourers does not sufficiently problematize justifications for their exploitation and risks validating a fantasy of animals as consensual participants in systems built precisely to dominate them.

In sum, applying the term resistance to nonhumans remains a complex and contested view, meaning that there is still much conceptual work to be done. There are objections to the use of these terms on the basis of anthropomorphism; however, not only does such literature remain narrowly focused on an arbitrary divide between "human" and "animal," but it also contradicts the recognizable, interdisciplinary consensus regarding consciousness and intentionality of nonhuman animals. Nevertheless, when I speak of nonhuman agencies, I am referring to ways of being that humans are not completely privy to and which thereby pose a threat to the security of human subjectivity, a category that derives its identity and status from the exclusion of the Animal and the less than human Other. As Derrida (2008) states, "*Animal* is a word that men have given themselves the right to give. These humans are found giving it to themselves, this

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> rather, more often than not, his arguments are not *arguments at all*, for they are not made in intellectual earnest, but rather to protect the speciesist from having to grapple with the implications of his own existential choices. (p. 36-7)

Sanbonmatsu (2014) continues, paraphrasing Sartre, stating that "speciesists, … far from wishing to get to the heart of the matter, 'delight' …. 'in acting in bad faith since they seek to persuade not by sound argument but to intimidate and disconcert'" (p. 37).

word, but as if they had received it as an inheritance. They have given themselves the word in order to corral a large number of living beings within a single concept: 'The Animal'" (p. 32). "The Animal" therein "designate[s] every living thing that is held not to be human (man as rational animal, man as political animal, speaking animal, zoon logon echon, man who says 'I' and takes himself to be the subject of a statement that he proffers on the subject of the said animal)" (Derrida, 2008, p. 31). By way of this mutuality, the animal therefore threatens the boundaries of human identity—as Butler (1993) states, "the construction of the human is a differential operation that produces the more and less 'human,' the inhuman, the humanly unthinkable. These excluded sites come to bound the 'human' as its constitutive outside, and to haunt these boundaries as the persistent possibility of their disruption and rearticulation" (p. 8). To acknowledge that there are parts of the more-than-human world that humans do not have the privilege of knowing, anticipating, or controlling, and that may even resist against attempts at control, is to admit to the precarity of the human-nonhuman binary, of the politics of power dependent on a continued rearticulation of this divide, and thus of human identity itself.

In recognizing their agency as "valuable because of the sort it is" (Nussbaum, 2011, p. 9), when I use the phrase nonhuman resistance, I am not seeking to argue that animals resist like humans do and that their moral consideration depends upon this speciesist measure. Although I do not discount their influence in the animal liberation movement, arguments that seek to extend legal status, rights, or personhood to nonhumans based on capacities "considered to be quintessentially and relevantly human" ultimately reinforce anthropocentrism and speciesism, wherein "it just so happens that certain animals happen to be 'human' enough to grant them standing" (Calarco, 2015, p. 27). What is more, as Maneesha Deckha (2021) argues,

the problem is not simply that an initiative that privileges certain human-like or human-

> enough animals as persons excludes all other animals, but that the exclusionary historical imprint of personhood inclines the concept in the present to systemically disfavour those that do not match the Western, able-bodied, propertied, human male identity through which personhood was first consolidated. (pp. 88-9)

As an alternative to personhood, Deckha offers "beingness": a status intended "to provide, at minimum, the legal recognition that personhood is meant to afford" but "caters to the ontologies of breathing, embodied creatures," wherein value is not ascribed to "disembodied" attributes of "paradigmatic persons" but rather to the "embodiment," "relational experience," and "vulnerability" of "living experience" (p. 121-2). With this notion of beingness in mind, it is necessary that inquiries into nonhuman resistance extend beyond using resistance to liken animals to humans and into a wider recognition of a shared "vulnerability" of "living experience" (Deckha, 2021, p. 122). Therefore, I regard the term resistance as a discursive tool to unsettle the speciesist discourse that claims instinct, accident, or "anything but" (Bagemihl, 1999) resistance to deny nonhumans their agency. Further, I am aware that applying a sweeping term such as resistance to nonhumans risks universalization. Thus, it is my intention to emphasize the heterogeneity of the nonhuman world that fails to ever be captured with a single word; I attest to instances of animal resistance as "complex singularities" as opposed to "universal claims" about nonhuman animals (Braidotti, 2013, p. 164). The intention in doing so is to provoke further questions of what resistance looks like for other nonhuman individuals beyond those I discuss here—questions that have largely gone unasked due to what C. Adams (2016) calls "a politics of the dismissive" composed of "arguments that separate caring into deserving/ undeserving or now/later or first those like us/then those unlike us" (p. 5). As such, I do not aim to prove that resistance, or any other terms, fully describe exactly what nonhumans

are thinking when they act in noncompliance; however, I purposefully avoid alternatives because the substitutes offer nothing more than to secure the false facts of human sovereignty and inherent animal inferiority. Therefore, I use these terms not as claims of either "sameness or knowable difference," but rather in a purposeful gesture to "an unknowability" of nonhumans and their prerogative "to determine themselves in spite of … established 'truth'" (Wadiwel, 2015, pp. 295, 276), and thus to resist, as embodied, vulnerable beings, the violence and control this "truth" affords.

1.2 Chapter overview

The subsequent chapters undertake analysis of the representation of nonhuman resistance in popular discourse. Specifically, the sources I attend to include popular media accounts of animal attacks, escapes, and other reports of behaviours considered anomalous or subversive. Chapter 2 explores the language of farmed animal resistance by analyzing the distancing strategies at play in the media's and public' response to three cases of escaped cows. Chapter 3 explores the discourse of captive animal resistance by looking at the controversy surrounding Tilikum the orca and his involvement in the deaths of three humans. Chapter 4 concludes with considering the broader implications of tracking animal resistance against a speciesist status quo and addresses the necessity of further inquiry into its relevance to intersectional research. Given that this thesis extends from a CAS paradigm, I address whether the question of nonhuman resistance extends beyond theory and into practice, particularly in terms of how CAS's tenet of direct action might account for and engage with nonhuman resistance within the project of total liberation.

Chapter 2: The ones who got away

> Loose animals are scared animals and scared animals are dangerous animals. We see it on the news and cringe—a cow causing havoc in rush hour traffic or a horse running loose through a residential area. When farm animals get loose, you can almost always guarantee an animal is going to get hurt or killed, a human is going to get injured and property is going to get damaged. (Farm & Food Care Ontario, 2020)

At present, we are experiencing a new shift in the discourse of animal agriculture, emanating from public demand for "humane," ethically-oriented products, a renewed criticism of industrial, large-scale practices, and a desire for increased animal "welfare." As Carey (2011) maintains, the humaneness "narrative" offers "not only a ready alibi for the economic and ethical status quo, but also the ethical salve of assurance that we humans and our factory farms are potentially humane after all" (p. 174). This narrative reorients profoundly exploitative and violent practices and the consumption of their products from permissible in spite of ethics to practices that are seemingly ethically engaged. This movement towards so-called humane slaughter involves the eradication of potential friction, not only in terms of concealing slaughter from public sight, but also by turning the animals themselves into supposedly indifferent or even cooperative participants.[25] In other words, the elimination of nonhuman resistance is implicated in creating the *appearance* of humaneness under a guise of animal complicity.

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[25] John Sanbonmatsu (2014) argues that "humane" discourse acts in "bad faith" through imagining the exploitation of nonhumans in terms of reciprocal benefit, "respect," "compassion," and a "*cooperative effort* between animals and humans," wherein killing is "depict[ed] as good for the animals … as if they were doing the animal a favour by *taking its life*" (p. 35). In this "bad faith" view, nonhuman animals "consent to their enslavement, and even to their deaths, at our hands," and "are killed with 'respect' and 'gratitude'" (p. 34-5). Nevertheless, Sanbonmatsu states, "toasting one's victim, of course, does nothing to restore the life and vitality of the victim—but it works wonders for the killer, transforming her purposeful act of cruelty and extreme violence" (p. 35).

Contemporary intensive farming protocols seek to limit resistance—or rather what are commonly referred to as "behavioural problems" (see Padalino & Riley, 2020; Underwood, 2002).[26] When these behaviours become cost-ineffective, they are addressed by altering animals' behaviour and physiology through castration (Palmer, Pedersen, & Sandøe, 2018),[27] drug treatment (Dunshea et al., 2001; Vanhonacker & Verbeke, 2011), nose rings for cattle (Allmacher, 1998; Fernandes et al., 2000), tail-docking for pigs (Nannoni et al., 2014; Sutherland et al., 2008), and beak- and toe-clipping for poultry (Breward & Gentle, 1985; Craig & Lee, 1990; Gentle et al., 1990).[28] Some mediating actions are deemed mild and proper "training" is said to assist animals in tolerating "novelty and changes in their routine" (Grandin, 1994, p. 1). However, those who exhibit aggressive behavior towards humans are culled (Landsberg & Denenberg, 2014). In fact, "very nervous" cows are more likely to be culled than "very calm" ones (Sewalem, Miglior, & Kistemaker, 2010, p. 4363).

Once the animals arrive at the slaughterhouse, their bodies are become increasingly immobilized, and resistance becomes progressively more difficult. Electric prods prompt the cattle to quickly jump into the "knocking" box, "reducing the probability of the animal's balking and holding up the line behind it" (Pachirat, 2011, p. 148). If there are any "thrashes or struggles," the knocker will "activate[] the side walls to further constrict [the animal]" (Pachirat,

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[26] For instance, cattle confined in close proximity will exhibit "abnormal behaviours" (Phillips, 2008, p. 69), including tongue-rolling and bar-biting, and "aggressive behaviours," such as fighting, butting, chasing (Gibbons, Lawrence, & Haskell, 2009, p. 2; see also Redbo, 1990).

[27] As Palmer, Pedersen, and Sandøe (2018) state, for animals raised for food, castration serves "to control aggressive male sexual behavior, for animals to reach slaughter weight more quickly and therefore cheaply, and to improve meat quality" (p. 199). Specifically, castrated bulls "tend to fatten better" (Palmer, Pedersen, & Sandøe, 2018, p. 199; see also Field, 1971), while the castration of male piglets "prevent[s] the taste or smell of boar-taint in pork" (Palmer, Pedersen, & Sandøe, 2018, p. 199).

[28] Transport likewise limits resistance as increased stock densities decrease exploratory behavior and maneuverability (Tarrant et al., 1988, p. 209) and can cause animals to become "lame" (González et al., 2012).

2011, p. 53). Once "suspended on the conveyor and squeezed by the side walls, the animal can now move only its head," which is then exposed to the bolt gun (Pachirat, 2011, p. 53). These processes illustrate that resistance in these animals is heavily managed and mitigated at all points of the production line to demand compliance and enforce docility. In this sense, the system expects resistance—the animals who resist and those who *appear* not to face the same ends: from the moment animals exit the truck, the immobilization increases as they are forced through narrowing, serpentine paths towards the end where a last moment of resistance, the thrashing of a head, is met with the "muted *pffft, pffft*" of the knocker's bolt gun (Pachirat, 2011, p. 54). The briefest moment of stillness is then quickly interrupted by the arrival of another thrashing head, and so it repeats.

To put the number of times this process repeats into perspective, between Canada's two largest high-speed beef processing facilities alone, over 6000 individual animals will die this way in a single day (Cargill Proteins, 2021). Numbers increase the smaller and more tractable a species appears. For instance, one of the largest pork processors in the United States, Smithfield, kills up to 32,000 pigs on an average day at its largest plant (Barboza, 2000), with all Smithfield facilities collectively killing over 27 million pigs per year (Tietz, 2006). Chickens are killed at a comparatively exponential scale—Tyson alone boasts killing 45 million individual chickens every week (Tyson Foods Inc., 2020).[29] To reach these numbers, the technologies of chicken slaughter have become particularly apt at suppressing or exploiting their resistance.[30]

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[29] Tyson Foods, Inc. is reportedly the second-largest producer of animal meat in the world (Fogleman, 2014) and was the second largest "polluter of US waterways" between 2010 and 2014 (Rumpler, 2016). In addition to environmental harm, the company has also had various instances of animal abuse in its facilities exposed through undercover video (Dicker, 2016; Quirk, 2013).

[30] This is likely why Wadiwel (2015) begins *The War against Animals* with an analysis of the "live hang"—a poultry slaughtering method aimed at "limiting escape regardless of how vigorously the chickens" resist (pp. 2-3).

The AIC has sought to create the appearance of welfare by suppressing resistance and transforming animals into docile participants. This process is done through material means, attending to the animals themselves, and epistemic means, manipulating public perception of the "truth" of animal agriculture. The latter process occurs largely through, as Medoro (2014) explains, the backing of so-called "animal scientists":

> Because the language of well-being originates in academia, [meat] producers have found themselves with a powerful fallback position. The "science," they say, proves that … the animals are "cared for" in an efficient, technologically advanced way by "farmers." Thus, in an echo chamber of words and concepts, ricocheting between industry and universities, the system itself remains unchanging and unchallenged from within. Challenges from without are cast as unscientific—as founded not upon the expertise they pay for at the universities but upon "perceptions" swayed by irrational, optically deluded animal rights activists. In response to the animal rights campaigns that have made [these technologies] visible to the public, the animal scientists have come out to tell us that we should not believe our eyes. (pp. 213-4)

Through this academia-backed "language of wellbeing," the technologies that seek to literally suppress nonhuman resistance are represented as tools of "welfare," as opposed to tools of violence, coercion, and control. Such language can be found, for example, in the work of Temple Grandin, a well-known animal scientist and proponent of humane exploitation, which seeks to show the public and producers that humane industrial slaughter can be made possible by "treat[ing] each animal with respect" and using some "tender loving care" (Grandin, 2008, p. 196) before killing them. Grandin claims that "we're going to continue to have feedlots and slaughterhouses, so the question is: what should a humane feedlot and slaughterhouse be like?"

(Grandin & Johnson, 2005, p. 180). This question is disconcerting given that Grandin has dedicated almost 30 years to creating exactly that. However, to answer the question: an operation that seeks to benefit from appearing humane should not only cover up any evidence of animal resistance,[31] but readily anticipate, mitigate, and subdue resistance on the level of a population.

For instance, Grandin (2000) asserts that "there needs to be something done" in terms of eliminating the negative behaviour of livestock on a genetic level (para. 5), a statement implicated in upholding the "veneer of peaceability" (Wadiwel, 2015, p. 13). Although breeding and culling for preferred dispositions is not new, Grandin (200) points to more direct means, such as "getting rid of the stress gene" because "producers have to decide which road they want to follow—continuing to put pounds on at all costs or moderating that to raise animals which are easier to handle and which will also have better pork quality" (para. 5). Despite Grandin's assertions that "our relationship with the animals we use for food must be symbiotic … a mutually beneficial relationship between two different living things" (Grandin & Johnson, 2009, p. 297), Carey (2011) argues that "a welfare contract instituted at a deeply overdetermined site of human dominance is simply not the same as a relationship that can be defined as symbiotic" and

> through this particular figuration of symbiosis, our position is simultaneously naturalized as both safely above, and wholly ensconced within, the ecological scene, with the consequence that we are dually licensed to treat animals however we desire … to utterly control the lives and bodies of animals to our ends in a context of neoliberal instrumental rationality becomes, figurally speaking, an expression of our participation in the rhythms

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[31] One way that evidence of noncompliance in animals, and the physically violent nature of their treatment overall, is obscured from consumers is through the removal of any bruising from their corpses. During processing, all bruising is required to be removed (Food Safety and Inspection Service, 2019), which costs the American beef industry, for instance, over $114 million annually (Boleman et al., 1998, p. 99)

of nature. (p. 180)

Considering Carey's assertion, the question therefore appears not to be how humans can eliminate the violence to which we subject nonhumans, but rather how one might create an animal for whom this violence is inconsequential. The goal therein is to make nonhumans into the very objects they are already treated as being.[32]

The following analysis looks at three cases of escaped cows, Yvonne, Hero Cow, and Betsy, to explore how mainstream discourse on farmed animal resistance maintains and is manipulated by "carnist-speciesist complex" (Weitzenfeld & Joy, 2014, pp. 24). As psychologist Melanie Joy (2010) defines, carnism, a "sub-ideology of speciesism," uses "institutional and discursive mechanisms" of denial and invisibility to convince "otherwise empathic people" (Weitzenfeld & Joy, 2014, p. 22) to disengage with their authentic, compassionate, and dissonance-inducing reactions to the violent realities imposed on so-called "edible" species (Joy, 2010, p. 17). In reviewing articles on the escapes of Yvonne, Hero Cow, and Betsy, I locate five recurring narratives that characterize a discourse on livestock escapes: fugitive status; individual exceptionalism; fame; heroism; and symbolic worth.[33] Nonhumans, particularly those killed in

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[32] This transformation is reaching a point of totality with the likes of *in vitro* meat and, most literally, the creation of so-called mindless animals via genetic "disenhancement" (Henschke, 2012, p. 56), in which nonhumans are genetically modified in ways that "eliminate the sensitization that occurs as a result of painful or traumatic experiences" (p. 118).

[33] I chose to analyze the cases of Yvonne, Hero Cow, and Betsy based on, first, the fact that they were given names, solely because it allows their accounts to be tracked without ambiguity, as opposed to those of unnamed individuals who are referred to by varying, inconsistent descriptions (e.g. cow, steer, beef, bovine, bull, animal), and second, the high degree of media response to their escapes, wherein the popularity, interest, and reach of the event in mainstream media was indicated by the number of relevant online articles available using the Google news search engine. From the set of articles returned, I selected 29 based on popularity and international recognition of the publishing website, as well as those articles appearing at the top of the search results, indicating relevancy and ease of access to said articles. Excluded were any non-news sources, such as blogs and websites devoted to advocacy, fundraising, or petitions. References to Facebook comments are included to provide additional context. A complete corpus analysis is beyond the scope of this inquiry, but, notwithstanding the relatively limited sample, this project seeks to substantiate the necessity of such future research.

the meat and animal product industries, are generally considered, within a speciesist paradigm, to lack agency and even all sense of awareness of what happens to them; this characterization allows for animals to be treated, to quote Cronon (1996), as "thing[s] capable of being bought and sold … quite apart from any autonomous values" they have (p. 133). In the case of those who escape, this language is decisively different, often treating them as individuals deserving of life. Representations of these runaway cows in mainstream news accounts too differ from speciesist characterizations of animals as lacking agency. These narratives, however, engage in speciesist logic in various, often contradictory, ways to placate the cognitive dissonance of consumers. This difference suggests that in having to confront the idea that real, living animals might flee their death, as opposed to the docile representations that the AIC professes, the public appears to accept that these nonhumans do in fact possess agency and the ability to demand their freedom. However, despite a seeming championing of what amounts to individual nonhuman sovereignty, a silence remains in terms of extending this recognition to all animal life, let alone on the level of species, in a morally consistent way. Just as it has professed that nonhumans within its systems can be both objects to be killed and consumed without concern *and* happily compliant participants, the carnist-speciesist complex convinces the public that it is normal, and even a truly "human" response, to desire to save individual escapees from slaughter while also continuing to consume the flesh of their kin.

2.1 Yvonne, Betsy, and Hero Cow

In May 2011, a six-year-old white and brown cow named Yvonne escaped from a farm in southern Germany and quickly became an international celebrity. She even inspired her own hashtag, #YvonnetheCow, where people voiced both support and witty jokes. Yvonne's saga

included a “shoot-to-kill order,” an animal whisperer, a studly bull, and a €10,000 bounty—yet, Yvonne was able to remain free until September of the same year when she befriended a farmer’s cows (BBC News, 2011a). Yvonne was tranquillized and taken to the Gut Aiderbichl animal sanctuary (Levy, 2011). Yvonne passed away on September 3rd, 2019, almost 8 years to the day after her capture (Gut Aiderbichl, 2015).

In the winter of 2018, a cow in southern Poland was being led to a truck bound for the slaughterhouse. Refusing to comply, she broke free from handlers, injured one in the process, and pushed through a metal fence (BBC News, 2018). She fled into Lake Nyskie as handlers approached (BBC News, 2018). Eventually, she made her way to an island, where she remained for four weeks—a furlough that garnered her the name “Hero Cow” from her supporters (Selk, 2018). Finally, when Hero Cow’s owner agreed to give her to a sanctuary, a veterinarian and rescuers went to the island to capture her (Selk, 2018). After three doses of tranquilizer and the stress of the ordeal, she died in the back of a truck on the shore of Lake Nyskie (Selk, 2018).

In June 2018, a three-year-old cow named Betsy, purchased only the day before, vanished from her enclosure at a Father’s Day rodeo event in Anchorage, Alaska (Farzan, 2019). Betsy soon found a new home—a rough, and massive, spread of forest just outside the city (Farzan, 2019). Despite many searches and attempts to capture her, including the use of police and drones, Betsy avoided capture (Farzan, 2019). For over a year after her escape, hikers would catch sight of Betsy, and her owner, Frank Koloski, spent “hours, days probably” looking for her (Associated Press, 2019). However, almost four years after her escape, the small Facebook group dedicated to her has gone quiet, except for her previous owner periodically promoting rodeo events and his “Spot Betsy?” t-shirt (Koloski, 2019). The group members comment—“Where is

Betsy?" (Krasnansky, 2020), "any info on Betsy?" (Jeskie, 2020)—but get no response. At the time of writing, Betsy has not been found.

2.1.1 Fugitive

The fugitive archetype appears to follow a thin line between pointing to the animal's dereliction and maintaining the guise of humane care and protection. In this regard, these so-called fugitive animals must return to where they came from, not merely for the safety of the human public, but above all for their own good. After all, if we are to believe the bad faith promises of humane discourse (Sanbonmatsu, 2014), there is nothing to fear at the slaughterhouse. As defined in the OED, a fugitive is "[o]ne who flees or tries to escape from danger, an enemy, justice, or an owner"—in adjective form, fugitive is that which has "taken flight … from duty, and enemy, justice or a master" (Oxford University Press, n.d.-a, para. 11). In its mainstream orientation, the word fugitive has a largely negative connotation, appearing predominantly in accounts of wanted or escaped human criminals—co-occurring words and phrases include "on the run" (Fitz-Gibbon, 2019, para. 2), "on the lam" (R. Adams, 2019, para. 1; Crepeau, 2020, para. 21; Gearty, 2020, para. 3); "at large" (R. Adams, 2019, para. 3; Dickson, 2019, para. 2); "fled" (Dickson, 2019, para. 2; Moxley, 2016, para. 4; Wall, 2020, para. 3); "eluded" (Fitz-Gibbon, 2019, para. 3; Moxley, 2016, para.1; Wall, 2020, para. 1); and "busted out" (Fitz-Gibbon, 2019, para. 3; Pradier, 2018, para. 1).

When it comes to animal escapees, the lexical choices follow a similar pattern. All but two of the articles on Yvonne, Hero Cow, and Betsy use words or phrases that connote fugitive status or criminality. In Yvonne's case, phrases include: "poses a danger" (BBC News, 2011a, para. 2); "rebel" (Stylist, 2011, para. 4); "at large" (Chappell, 2011b, para. 2; Levy, 2011, para.

2); “put up a fight” (Levy, 2011, para. 2); “deem her a threat” (Chappell 2011a, para. 2); “adopted a lifestyle that might be called Sherwoodian” (Chappell, 2011a, para. 2)—the last employing trope of the outlaw with a heart of gold. Articles on Hero Cow make similar lexical choices: “rebel”; “evade capture” (Hanson, 2018, para. 4, 1); “on the run” (Burns & Tahir, 2018, para. 2); and “runaway” (BBC News, 2018, para. 1; Deabler, 2018, para. 13). Further, references to fugitive status appear in Betsy’s accounts: “on the run”; “successfully evaded local law enforcement” (Farzan, 2019, para. 2); “on the loose” (Chang, 2019, para. 6); “on the lam” (CBC News, 2019, n.p.; Wanshel, 2019, n.p.); “doesn’t want to be caught”; “evaded capture”; “busted out”; “continues to elude” (CBC News, 2019, para. 4); “evades seizure”; and “fled her pen” (Wanshel, 2019, para. 5). Further, Betsy is directly named a “fugitive,” paralleled in the use of Anchorage Police infrared drones to track her down (Farzan, 2019, para. 2).

The archetypal designation of fugitive involves ideological assumptions regarding the escaped animals’ subject positions. The individual nonhuman as a “fugitive” or “runaway,” intends to persuade readers to agree on the animal’s deviant status and thus, implicitly, to agree that their rightful place is that from which they escaped. In this regard, only the return of the animal to its “proper” location could eliminate the animal’s fugitive status and restore the status quo. This move is, however, carefully done. While words such as “fugitive,” “runaway,” and “rebel” are used consistently, excluded are words such as “prisoner,” “inmate,” or “convict.” The cows escape from a “barn” (Hewitt, 2019, para. 3) or a “slaughterhouse” (Embury-Dennis, 2018, para. 1), but never from “confinement,” “prison,” or “lockup.” Few specifics or identifiers are given as to the particular place of escape, concealing and diverting attention from the larger institutions that house the unmentioned, still captive prisoners. This avoidance of words signifying imprisonment or incarceration maintains the opaqueness of the AIC’s technologies of

power and its similarities to the prison industrial complex. Furthermore, the facetious language of animal "rebellion," denoting something more akin to mischief than the true sense of the word, minimizes the distress and fear that the individual might be experiencing. Yet, this narrative illustrates a double-bind, given that the public expresses a strong desire for the escapee to maintain their freedom. As the desire for these "food" animals to escape slaughter is antithetical to the carnist status quo, the public's supportive position illustrates a failure of this fugitive characterization to convince them of the animal's deviant status while managing to continue to "hide terrible things in plain sight" (Medoro, 2014, p. 208). What results is a potential opportunity for invigorating an ethical response by the public. Indeed, this narrative's attempt to position the nonhuman escapees as unlawful does something unintended: it acknowledges the individuality of an animal, suggesting agency and purpose, and therefore can destabilize the massification of animals.

This narrative can be understood through Foucault's (1978/1990, 2007, 2012) attention to disciplinary power, which involves the creation and "efficient regimentation of docile bodies" (Novek, 2005, p. 27). Nonhumans in industrial operations are prisoners, rendered into docile bodies through different disciplinary methods, including "confinement, observation, and record keeping" (Coppin, 2003, p. 605), which are generally invisible to public society. The only possibility for abscondence from disciplinary control is, as Welsh (2016) argues, "the physical or figurative 'escape'" of the "truanting pupil, the AWOL patient, the prison fugitive" or, I add, the escaped animal (p. 44). However, by absconding, escapees are not granted freedom or recognition under sovereign law—rather, they enter "the totalized zone of biopolitical ban and living death" (Welsh, 2016, p. 44). This notion of "biopolitical ban" and "living death" is akin to Agamben's (1998) theory of the *homo sacer*, an individual banished from the political sphere

who is “at every instant exposed to an unconditional threat of death” (p. 103). Animals in the industrial system are arguably already “markers of bare life,” reduced to their biological and reproductive processes—*homo sacers* who can be “killed without the commission of a homicide” (Agamben, 1998, p. 139). Animals killed for their flesh are subject to what Jacques Derrida (1995) calls a “noncriminal putting to death” (p. 278). It is in this regard that one cannot “murder” an animal. The issue raised here is that, under law, nonhumans are generally considered property, which by definition cannot “have rights or duties or be bound by or recognize rules” (Waldron, 1985, p. 314). In this sense, nonhumans, as property, are always already precluded from the legal sphere.

As Agamben (1998) remarks, however, for the *homo sacer*, “no life, as exiles and bandits know well, is more ‘political’ than his” (p. 103). Once escaped, these animals take on a more ambiguous role and a double-subjugation as *homo sacer*—they leave one “state of exception” (i.e. the slaughterhouse or industry farm) and enter into another “where the dividing line between citizen and outlaw, legality and illegality, law and violence, and ultimately life and death are strategically and at times fatally blurred” (Downey, 2009, p. 112). The reviewed articles illustrate this ambiguity through fugitive discourse by recognizing the escaped animal’s simultaneous inclusion/exclusion in the political sphere. Slaughterhouse workers share this in/exclusion status, wherein workers must participate in the “political ‘environments’” of slaughterhouses, but, through spatial and social hierarchization and separation, possess finite opportunities to wield power in regards to lessening their own subjugation, let alone for the animals (Thierman, 2010, p. 95). Ultimately, the double-bind of this fugitive characterization means that other narratives have arisen that actually seek to revoke the animal’s *homo sacer* status by envisioning the animals as much more than bare life. Indeed, this discourse is not discrete, particularly in

Yvonne, Hero Cow, and Betsy's cases, as the popular reach of their stories garner more generous and positive outlooks on their escapes. That is to say, the other narratives I will next discuss appear to diverge from this fatalistic and largely anthropocentric discourse.

2.1.2 The exception

In each of Yvonne, Hero Cow, and Betsy's cases, this narrative of the exceptional individual appears through a focus on the escaped animal as extraordinary, special, or atypical in contrast to less evolved others of her species. While recognizing nonhumans as individuals is a necessary part of dismantling speciesism and its massification of nonhumans, this narrative works differently, separating a singular animal from the mass of others who did not escape and emphasizing that this animal, and this animal alone, is special, unique, and exceptional. Based on this uniqueness alone might this animal be said not to deserve not to die—the assumption therein is to disregard all of the others who, again assumedly, do not possess the same qualities.

For instance, there is emphasis on physical dispositions, such as Yvonne's "athletic abilities" (Iarlori, 2011, para. 6), her "bullish nature," and her ability to "put up a significant fight before being tranquilized" (Topping, 2011, para. 5). Here, Yvonne as possessing a "bullish" constitution places an assumed—cowish, perhaps—docility of female animals against a supposed non-docile drive of self-preservation in male animals. However, as Brain (1999) proposes, increasing research suggests that this "view that female mammals are more docile" is less so based in truth and more so arises "from imposing human values on animal studies" (p. 218). Remarkable intelligence and emotional acumen are referenced as well; for example, Yvonne is said to be "the cleverest cow in the world, no doubt about it" (Levy, 2011, para. 2), and her intelligence is "well above average for a cow" (Iarlori, 2011, para. 5). The intention is thus to discount all other cows, whether they are seen as having "average" or even higher than

"average" intelligence —this is of course in spite of there being little foundation to substantiate any quantifiable claims to "average" cow intelligence (Marino & Allen, 2017). In Hero Cow's case, adjectives such as "brave," "plucky" (Culbertson, 2018, n.p.), "valiant," and "bold" (Burns & Tahir, 2018, para. 3) also seek to elevate Hero Cow's actions above those viewed as "average" for a cow. While no comparisons to humans are given outright, there appears to be a certain type of anthropomorphism occurring that hides what is really at stake. Articles also highlight that Yvonne sensed her upcoming slaughter (Chappel, 2011a; Topping, 2011), and her "urge to be free is strong, even for a cow" (Chappel, 2011b, para. 8). The latter claim here engages in a speciesist assumption that cows, like other herd animals, are happily complicit and do not have the capacity to even desire freedom, let alone act on it—the unmentioned comparison involves the common metaphor of certain species, for example horses or wolves, as having "natural" inclinations for freedom. Finally, Yvonne's cunningness and sagacity are recognized—"Yvonne knows what she's doing and she's tricking us" (Chappel, 2011a, para. 4). Intention here is given to Yvonne, a quality largely withheld from nonhumans in speciesist discourse. In this sense, this narrative illustrates another double-bind, wherein by establishing a singular animal as having agency, intention, intelligence, and emotional acuity, the public may be encouraged to see animals as more than what they have been led to believe. Therefore, there must be consistent emphasis on the singular animal being unique from the rest and alone in possessing qualities that might be deserving of freedom.

Betsy's accounts emphasize her separation from other animals largely based on the fact that Betsy is one of few cows raised in Alaska. Betsy's singularity is highlighted in her name:

> If you had to come up with a name for a cow, Betsy would probably be one of the first to spring to mind. It's bovine *classique*: the Jessica of human girl names in the 1990s.

> Which is why I was surprised to find out that one of the most famous cows in Alaska — and maybe the nation, maybe even the world, depending on whom you ask — was named basic, generic Betsy. (Chang, 2019, para. 12).

This arguably ill-thought out name choice is unsurprising as Betsy's owner Frank Koloski named her "on the spot … during a news interview" (Chang, 2019, para. 13). Lexical choices in these articles signify a move to individualize the escaped animal and set her apart from others of the same species. What this makes of those animals who did not escape, however, is largely left unsaid. By way of exclusion, not only is the slaughter of thousands of unnamed individuals concealed, but also the fact that they may well be individuals too.

This individualizing discourse differs from general discourse on livestock. Comparison of the lexical choices for describing Yvonne, Hero Cow, and Betsy to choices made when describing captive cows illustrates a stark contrast. First, individuality is little recognized in the dominant discourse on cows—they are "herds" or "breeds" but rarely "individuals." C. Adams (1994/2018) remarks on this deindividualization that occurs in the animal product industry: "someone who has a very particular, situated life, a unique being, is converted into something that has no distinctiveness, no uniqueness, no individuality" (p. 201). The few instances when individuality matters, and is, in fact, bred for, are relegated to cattle judging at agricultural shows. Second, cows, in general terms, are more likely to be described as "quiet" (R. Doyle & Moran, 2015, p. 60; Grohman, 2013, p. 120) and "docile" (Albright & Arave, 1997, p. 61; R. Doyle & Moran, 2015, p. 56; Grohman, 2013, p. 131), as opposed to "brave," "bold", and "valiant," as we see in Yvonne, Betsy, and Hero Cow's cases. However, unmentioned in these accounts is the fact, as previously stated, that animals with behaviour issues are often "culled"—or rather, killed—as brave and bold are not personality traits that are desirable in the AIC, as the

goal of its disciplinary measures is to create bodies that are not brave or bold, but docile. As such, while Yvonne, Betsy, and Hero Cow's "bold" dispositions are hailed by the media, these attributes, if they had not escaped, would surely only hurry them to slaughter more quickly.

While the AIC relies on the massification of animals, the media appears to do the opposite. According to Salmon and Moh (1992), the media decontextualizes events by "focusing on [the] individual-level"—this ideological approach "divert[s] scrutiny and criticism" from the larger structures of power that made the event possible (p. 158). This tactic could explain the tendency for the media to highlight the escaped cow's singularity. By doing so, the attention and cause of the event is brought upon an individual animal, as opposed to the AIC and its disciplinary control that is being resisted. In sum, although this individualization of the escaped animal offers a perspective on nonhumans that diverts from domination discourses that seek to deindividualize, I maintain that this discursive narrative remains anthropocentric. In fact, this narrative reiterates the politics of domination—in a less ostensible but arguably more disingenuous way—through the lexical exclusion of those animals who are not individualized. Without speaking to those animals who do not escape, this discourse merely reinstates human mastery and control over what animals are deemed worthy of life or death.

2.1.3 Famous

A narrative of fame evolves from the notion of individual exceptionalism: an extraordinary animal often becomes a famous animal and nobody wants to kill a famous animal. The international outrage sparked by Walter Palmer's killing of Cecil the lion in 2015 is clear evidence of this (Capecchi & Rogers, 2015; Crookes, 2015). In Yvonne's case, examples include: "brings fame" (Pidd, 2011b, n.p.); "Germany's most famous fugitive" (Pidd, 2011a, para. 1); "national obsession" (Batty, 2011, para. 6), "Germany's most wanted moo," "national celebrity"

(CBBC Newsround, 2011, para. 3); “popular topic” and “popular draw” (BBC News, 2011a, para. 12); “All eyes are on Yvonne” (Kelly, 2011, para. 2); “near-folk hero” (Mandell, 2011, para. 2); and “plenty of followers on the internet” (Iarlori, 2011, para. 6). Hero Cow gets a similar treatment: “captured the nation” (Culbertson, 2018, para. 9); “celebrated” (Hanson, 2018, para. 1; Burns & Tahir, 2018, para. 1); “garnered attention worldwide”; “her fans” (Hanson, 2018, para. 5); “celebrity status”; and “made headlines around the world” (Burns & Tahir, 2018, para. 3). Lastly, Betsy is claimed to be “one of the most famous cows in Alaska—and maybe the nation, maybe even the world” (Chang, 2019, para. 9). Other lexical choices emphasize Betsy’s fame: “near-celebrity status” (CBC News, 2019, para. 3); “Betsy’s disappearance … hit national news” (Chang, 2019, para. 1); “her reputation rose to folk-heroine levels” (Chang, 2019, para. 10); “well-known entity” (Chang, 2019, para. 15); and a kind of “local celebrity” (Yancey-Bragg, 2019, para. 5; see also Boots, 2019; Schirm, 2019).

In Yvonne and Hero Cow’s cases, their celebrity helps propel a campaign to save them from slaughter—however, as previously stated, Hero Cow dies in the process of capture. Betsy’s fate is still unknown, and even less is known about what Betsy’s fate might be if she is captured as her designation of “rodeo cow” is ambiguous. However, a hint to Betsy’s demise appears buried in a singular article: “when it comes to the yearling cows like Betsy, … Koloski rounds them up from a ranch and returns them after the season ends (he won’t disclose the location of the ranch because its owner wants to ‘stay out of the limelight’)” (Chang, 2019, para. 14). It is precisely by “stay[ing] out of the limelight” that the various apparatuses of animality function—as the animal experimentation exposé film *Unnecessary Fuss* suggests in its title (Pacheco & Newkirk, 1984), there is a strong desire throughout these apparatuses, which Koloski appears to commiserate with, to suppress that which might have “the potential to stir up all sorts of

unnecessary fuss" (Gennarelli, 1983, cited in Orlans et al., 1998, p. 74). Fame, it seems, is only for the escapees and not the entities that always already exploit them.

However, there is potential in this focus on the fame of escaped animals. For instance, a Massachusetts cow named Emily escaped from the A. Arena & Sons, Inc. slaughterhouse in the winter of 1995 and eventually found refuge on Christmas Eve at the Peace Abbey sanctuary (Peace Abbey, 2015). Following her death in 2004, a life size statue of Emily called the "Sacred Cow Animal Rights Memorial" was created (Peace Abbey, 2015). In Emily's case, her fame helps advance non-anthropocentric ways of living alongside nonhuman animals—as her grave marker notes, "Out of respect for Emily and all animals, consider refraining from eating meat for the rest of the day, or for the rest of your life" (Bedrosian, 2012, n.p.).[34] For Yvonne, Hero Cow, and Betsy, no statues exist, as of yet. However, their stories and the fame they achieved do offer avenues for advocating non-anthropocentric worldviews—only if one is to cast the spotlight around these bovines and towards that from which they escape.

2.1.4 A hero

For animals such as Yvonne, Hero Cow, and Betsy, their infamy and seeming rarity amongst other cows evolves into a discourse of heroism—a hero to whom, however, is a question many articles leave unanswered. In Yvonne's case, she is cast as a "heroic cow" (Mandell, 2011, para. 7), the "heroine of the summer" (BBC News, 2011b, para. 9), the "most

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[34] Emily is not the only animal whose death was immortalized by a statue. In 1903, the illegal vivisection of a dog at the University of London sparked a seven-year long battle between anti- and pro-vivisectionists. Following a trial that saw few radical changes to vivisection practices, a bronze statue and plaque of the dog was erected, stating "Men and Women of English: how long shall these Things be?" (Lansbury, 1985). Riots ensued, with medical students attacking the statue with crowbars and sledgehammers (*The Times*, 1907). Due to the cost of patrolling the area and unrelenting demonstrations, the statue was ultimately removed in 1910 (Lansbury, 1985). In 1985, a new statue was erected without controversy, illustrating most markedly the current conception of the dog as no longer "a public image of defiance" but as a "pet" alone (Kean, 2003, p. 368).

sensational of runaway ‘celebimals’” (Stylist, 2011, para. 3), and even “Germany’s summer Joan of Arc” (Iarlori, 2011, n.p.). Other terms and phrases speak to Yvonne’s heroism, such as “glory” (Levy, 2011, para. 1) and “something of a hero status” (Stylist, 2011, para. 3). One article alone refers to whom Yvonne might be a hero to, stating, “If only a single spark is necessary to start a revolution, could it be possible for other cows to follow Yvonne’s steps towards a life of freedom and emancipation? … Is it possible, then, that Yvonne’s ‘heretical’ message has started to find followers amidst European cattle?” (Iarlori, 2011, para. 6). The heroism of our second cow is obvious in her given moniker, Hero Cow—the “most heroic cow in Poland” (Selk, 2018, n.p.). In contrast, Betsy receives little recognition as a hero—rather she is a “folk-heroine” (Chang, 2019, para. 10), signaling her popularity more than any heroic actions. This dissimilarity between the cases, I argue, arises because Betsy’s demise is uncertain and goes unrecognized in all but one article. Indeed, Yvonne and Hero Cow’s fates at the monolithic slaughterhouse are referenced in most articles, which provides an unspecified, inhuman antagonist for our protagonists to oppose.

The heroism discourse can be most easily understood as a journalistic reliance on what is one of the most pervasive monomyths in human culture: the hero’s journey. Detailed in Joseph Campbell’s (2008) *A Hero with a Thousand Faces*, the hero “ventures forth from the world of common day into a region of supernatural wonder: fabulous forces are there encountered and a decisive victory is won: the hero comes back from this mysterious adventure with the power to bestow boons on his fellow man” (p. 23). According to J. Campbell, there are three main stages to the hero’s journey: “separation or departure”; “the trials and victories of initiation”; and the “return and reintegration with society” (p. 34). This narrative structure of the hero’s journey is apparent in the several articles on Yvonne, Hero Cow, and Betsy. Their adventures begin with a “blunder,” as J. Campbell calls it: a “merest chance” that “reveals an unsuspected word, and the

individual is drawn into a relationship with forces that are not right understood" (p. 25). Yvonne manages to breach an electric fence that *normally* functions to contain the livestock; workers dismiss the order to tranquilize Hero Cow as they "*assumed* Hero Cow would comply" (Selk, 2018, para. 6, emphasis added); and Betsy *luckily* backs into a gate left unlatched by a child, "[j]ust before the rodeo [is] about to start" (Chang, 2019, para. 2). The subtext of this trope is that an unexpected happenstance, not an intentional act on the part of the animal, is the impetus for the escape, whereby the animal's agency and intent can be easily disregarded. Hidden behind the heroic acclaim, the cows are denied their will, with the escape reflecting only a failure of the structure of control. This trope relies on, as Wadiwel (2015) describes, a speciesist "discourse that automatically assumes that non human animals are in essence tools or the passive recipients of human control" (p. 207). Nevertheless, the fact that these escapes were made possible by a "merest chance" does not necessarily have to discount the animals' agency, forethought, and will in taking the opportunity to flee. In fact, the point is that opportunities for resistance are few and far between, and countless animals live and die without ever encountering a chance.[35] The difference between those animals and Yvonne, Betsy, and Hero Cow is simply that the latter had the opportunity to escape.

Ultimately, this supposed "blunder" propels the hero towards a journey into a "land of trials" (J. Campbell, 2008, p. 90)—as J. Campbell (2008) describes, "the original departure into the land of trials represented only the beginning of the long and really perilous path of initiatory conquests and moments of illumination" (p. 90). This notion of tribulation is employed in the

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[35] Many animals who do seize the opportunity to escape normally receive far less sympathy than Yvonne, Betsy, and Hero Cow, being returned to the slaughterhouse to be killed as planned (Fractenberg & Kern-Jedrychowska, 2016; Leone, 2021; Naylor, 2021). Others have their throat slits in Home Depot parking lots (Seldon, 2019) or are shot to death by police on highways (CBC News, 2015; The Canadian Press, 2011) and city streets (Fenton & Wells, 2014).

heroic discourse, as the cows' initial escapes are followed by narratives of their tribulations: Yvonne is tempted into capture by the "George Clooney of Bulls," as well as her own calf (Pidd, 2011b, para. 6); Hero Cow must swim from island to island and endure a lack of food; and Betsy must avoid police drones and survive in the rugged Alaskan wilderness. One might also consider the role of individuals such as Paweł Kukiz and his online campaign to save Hero Cow, as Kukiz functions in a similar way to J. Campbell's (2008) "supernatural aid": a being who assists the hero in his or her traversing of the land of trials (p. 57). Again, the discourse of animals as "passive recipients of human control" (Wadiwel, 2015, p. 207) appears—the escape and the subsequent journey must be enabled by someone or something other than the animal. After navigating perilous and trying situations, the hero receives, in some form or another, a "life-transmuting trophy" (J. Campbell, 2008, p. 1167)—for our cows, their trophy is their life. Yvonne is granted hers, as is Hero Cow, at least until her untimely death. The third stage in the hero's journey is the "return and reintegration into society" (J. Campbell, 2008, p. 29). After receiving their "life-transmuting trophy," the hero returns to society, usually through the aid of their supernatural helper, as an "unquenched source through which society is reborn" (J. Campbell, 2008, p. 14-15)—in sum, the hero is "transfigured" and returns to "teach the lesson ... learned of life renewed" (J. Campbell, 2008, p. 15). Although Hero Cow and Betsy, as of writing, never "return" from their journeys, Yvonne does follow this path—she is granted life at a farm sanctuary, where I assume her heroic story is used to teach others.

Yvonne and Hero Cow's hero statuses fuel what Boorstin (1962/2012) calls the "social illusion" of the modern hero who is "not what they seem" (p. 51). In Yvonne's case, the illusion is one of perceived munificence for an exceptional animal on the part of the reader, and in broader terms, society. Yvonne, an especially heroic cow who undertakes a perilous journey,

should reasonably be granted her life—as opposed to an "average" cow, for whom there is no reason to do the same. In both Yvonne and Hero Cow's cases, the public response indicates that both animal-lovers and meat-eaters appear to agree with this logic: the cows' heroic statuses are less about the cows themselves, and more about the "values that they represent in a specific social context" (Kelsey, 2015, p. 975). The cows arise as "heroes" in a time when long held beliefs regarding the subjugation of nonhumans are being increasingly questioned, while the AIC continues to compromise in order to appease social concerns. In this sense, raising an escaped animal to the level of hero is a compromise—a few animals, here or there, promote the illusion of a benevolent system while it continues to slaughter other individuals *en masse*.

2.1.5 Symbolic worth

The final narrative that I locate within these accounts is one of symbolic worth. In this narrative, Yvonne, Hero Cow, and Betsy become more than cows—they are positioned as symbols, meaning their escapes represent abstractly and in human terms, notions of freedom, rebellion, dignity, and a return to nature. For example, Yvonne is a "symbol for the freedom and dignity of animals everywhere, though particularly cows, which are often seen as being nothing more than a source of meat and milk" (Levy, 2011, para. 1). She becomes an "incandescent symbol of freedom and animal dignity," but the author adds "Okay, that may be hyperbolic" (Chappel, 2011a, para. 1). Yvonne "dashed to freedom just before she was to be transported to a slaughterhouse" (Chappel, 2011b, para. 1). She is seen as a "type of freedom fighter 'for the animal-loving republic" (Chappel, 2011a, para. 5). One article links Yvonne's saga to a different form of freedom fighting, Libya's civil war, that was ongoing at the time of Yvonne's escape: "It's not just the events in Libya and the aftermath of the riots that Stylist has been paying attention to in the news of late - we've also been following the plight of Yvonne, a runaway cow

who has become a symbol for rebellion in her native Germany" (Stylist, 2011, para. 1).

In Hero Cow's case, much of her symbolic weight comes again from Paweł Kukiz's posts. In one of his posts, Kukiz (2018) takes on a patriotic tone, stating, that "Hero Cow did not succumb" and "is still on the battlefield" (n.p.). Further, Kukiz positions Hero Cow as symbol of Poland's freedom and success, stating that is "if all citizens demonstrated such determination as this cow" the country would be more prosperous—or rather "a country of flowing milk*" (*Kukiz, 2018, n.p.), a play on the Exodus-alluding idiom "a land flowing with milk and honey" (King James Bible, 1769/1987, Exod. 3:8). Others call Hero Cow is an "icon of freedom (Hanson, 2018), "inspirational," "her death is a kind of victory," and that "at least she lived free, to the end" (Selk, 2018, para. 25, 28). In Betsy's case, she is represented as a symbol of freedom or escape from a hectic society and a return to nature. In an ode to Betsy published in the Anchorage Daily News, author Tom Hewitt (2019) signals to Betsy as a symbol of human desire to escape society:

> You traded a barn for the forests and open sky, traded regular feedings for whatever grass you could browse beneath the spruce trees. You've shamed all of us Alaskans who fancy ourselves outdoors enthusiasts by taking packing light to its furthest extreme. (para. 4)

An interview with a local resident affirms Betsy's symbolic status: "Something about this cow—that was also striking out on her own in the middle of the wilderness, making a life on her own—really resonated with me, and I think a lot of other people, too" (Chang, 2019, para. 10).

This symbolic rendering of the escaped cows is not out of the norm. In fact, animals have long stood as symbols for human desire and human understanding of the world. In *About Looking*, John Berger (1980) describes the origins of human and animal relations: "[t]he examples are endless. Everywhere animals offered explanations, or more precisely, lent their

name or character to a quality, which like all qualities, was in its essence, mysterious" (p. 8-9). However, this signification of the cows as symbols of, for instance, freedom renders the cows into symbols of *human-centric* desires and values—while the lived experiences of the cows prior to their escapes are of no consequence. What is left unsaid in this symbolic rendering are the individual cows' own desires for freedom and escape from a situation that humans themselves have created. When a farmed animal escapes, the public sees before their eyes an individual who has agency, awareness, and a desire to live, and they are inspired to act compassionately and with empathy. While carnism leads us to believe the opposite, it is a remarkably simple cognitive step to then think that this individual animal is just *one* of a billion of Yvonnes, Hero Cows, and Betsys for whom we should feel the same urgency, a billionfold, in halting their deaths. If the idea of a singular cow being sent back to slaughter evokes such significant moral outrage, then that fact that this process occurs millions of times over each year should evoke exponentially greater horror and lead to the realization that what we are doing is not normal, natural, or necessary. However, this symbolic construction serves as a final distancing strategy that seeks to satisfy the many double binds created when escaped animals appear on scene. The impassioned feelings towards a nonhuman's self-reliance, agency, freedom, and sovereignty is redirected towards the goals of human society. The animals' actions, despite being the literal actions of these animals, become anthropomorphized, in the sense that Yvonne may simply be a cow who wandered, but her story can be used as a metaphor for human escape. Thus, the ubiquitous concern for these escaped animals, which might easily, if unfettered, cast scrutiny upon the carnist-speciesist complex, is appropriated into an upheaval of humanist, patriotic celebration. In other words, this mainstream discourse by all means appears to show that advocacy for one of these singular animals is really just a testimony to human values of which these nonhumans just

so happen to embody.

In sum, these narratives illustrate the ways in which speciesism and carnism function to dismiss animal resistance as *anything but* resistance. What they offer is a way of reconciling these escapes, and the compassion they appear to incite, within a carnist status quo that does not require the animals to be recognized as subjects, in either the moral or legal sense unless as property. When animals escape and the invisibility of AIC fails to hold, it threatens to remind the public of who exactly is hidden by the mass "institutionalized forgetting" that allows for industrialized animal slaughter (Otter, 2005, p. 50). However, the attention that escaped animals receive in mainstream discourse has largely failed to engage the public in extending their concern for individual animals who do not encounter the opportunity to escape but have agency and will nonetheless—animals that resist in ways that the public is rarely privy to, as they struggle, up until their deaths, against the tools precisely designed to confine, incapacitate, and rob them of their agency and lives. In this regard, there is no question that, contrary to the "wildly misleading discourse" of animal welfare, animals, escapees or not, are certainly not "happy-to-be-eaten" (Weitzenfeld & Joy, 2014, p. 22). What is more, given that "the apparatus learns" (Chrulew, 2018, p. 26), continually seeking ways to throttle opportunities for resistance and to hide it from the public, it is exactly those animals who *appear* not to resist that make intervention and liberation of critical emergency.

Chapter 3: There's something wrong with Tilikum

Tilikum was born a free-living orca in December of 1981 (Cowperthwaite, 2013). Just shy of two years old, around the time he would have been weaning from his mother, Tilikum was captured along with two other calves off the coast of Berufjördur, Iceland (Zimmerman, 2010). For a year, Tilikum was kept in a concrete tank with the other calves at the Hafnarfjördur Marine Zoo (Zimmerman, 2010). By 1984, Tilikum was purchased by Sealand of the Pacific, a marine park with a history marred by dead orcas.[36] It was at Sealand that Tilikum was involved in the first human death of three. On February 20, 1991, Keltie Byrne, a 23-year-old part-time trainer at Sealand, died, according to coroner inquest, due to an "accident" (Coroner's Court of British Columbia, 1991). Witnesses stated that "one of the whales grabbed [Keltie's] foot and pulled her back into the water" (Associated Press, 1991, para. 3). For close to ten minutes, Keltie submerged repeatedly while various attempts at rescue were made until her lifeless body was finally able to be removed from the pool (Coroner's Court of British Columbia, 1991). Not long after Keltie's death, Sealand closed—and Tilikum was sold SeaWorld Orlando. (Kirby, 2012). In 1999, Tilikum was involved in the death of Daniel Dukes, found naked and dead on the back of Tilikum with significant injuries (District Nine Medical Examiner's Office, 2010). Dukes's death was likewise deemed an accident (District Nine Medical Examiner's Office, 2010). However, Dukes's parents, who filed a lawsuit against SeaWorld, believed that Tilikum had dragged him into the water (Brabant, 1999). The third and final death involving Tilikum occurred in 2010, launching the story of the so-called "serial killer" whale to a global audience (ex. Kroenert,

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[36] A female orca, Chimo, died at Sealand of the Pacific in 1972 (Ford & Ellis, 1999), a female orca Miracle died under suspicious circumstances in 1982 (Renyard, 2010); several other whales, including Haida, Miracle's companion Shadow, and several unnamed calves have also been reported to have died in captivity at Sealand, according to a Greenpeace investigation in the late 1980s (McNeill, 2012).

2013; Farber, 2010; Smith, 2010). On February 24th, 2010, senior animal trainer Dawn Brancheau had just finished performing with Tilikum and was "hugging him from the side of the tank" (Pilkington, 2010, para. 3). Suddenly, Dawn was in the water, and Tilikum then "took off really fast, came back around, bobbed up in the water and grabbed" Dawn again (Pilkington, 2010, para. 5). Tilikum shook Dawn "violently," pulling her under and "swimming around with her" (BBC News, 2010, para. 12). It took thirty minutes to retrieve Dawn from Tilikum and by that time she was dead (Soltis, 2010). The death of Dawn Brancheau was underpinned by two haunting questions: did Tilikum intend to kill Dawn, and if he did, why?

As I will show, the answers to these questions are controlled by certain "truth discourses" (Rabinow & Rose, 2006, p. 197) about nonhumans and the reality of their captivity. In this sense, the dominant speciesist paradigm that justifies cetacean captivity also trivializes their resistance. These narratives differ from those seen in the cases of runaway cows, partially due to the fact that cetaceans are idealized, being more broadly recognized as possessing high-level cognitive functions, whereas cows, as a rule, are not. This awareness means that for orca resistance to align with the speciesist worldview that makes their captivity permissible, significant cognitive hoop-jumping is required. After all, within a speciesist worldview, cetacean resistance should be an impossibility, and scholars who make claims to such risk the charge of anthropomorphism. However, as Tilikum's actions suggest, resistance occurs, and when it does humans struggle to make sense of it with the few tools that speciesism affords them. The following chapter analyzes the case of Tilikum, his involvement in the deaths of three humans, and the 2013 documentary *Blackfish* to explore whether mainstream representations of captive animal resistance maintain the speciesist status quo. The violent and deadly incidents involving Tilikum have not only received extensive public attention, they have also had repercussions for captive animals across

the globe. Therefore, analyzing how the discourse on animal resistance functions in the case of Tilikum offers a generative path for considering how captive animals themselves take part in their own liberation and what this means for the present-day manifestation of animal captivity. If animals' abilities to resist are recognized in tandem with a recognition of their agency, intention, and value in their own right, it engenders a reconsideration of human supremacy. This reconsideration involves addressing a long-forgotten fact, that humans are embodied beings who, despite claims of sovereignty over the "natural world," can become prey to those whom they have preyed upon.

3.1 Blame the human

The first narrative surrounding Tilikum's actions is that which was put forth by SeaWorld itself: individual human blame. The day following Dawn's death, SeaWorld officials claimed that Dawn's "very long hair in a ponytail" had "swung in front of [Tilikum]," causing him to grab her "by the hair" and pull her into the tank (Ferran & Goldman, 2010, para. 2). The extensive OSHRC investigation following Dawn's death illustrates that SeaWorld representatives continued to follow "the corporate line" and shift blame towards Dawn herself (Occupational Safety and Healthy Review Commission [OSHRC], 2012, p. 37). According to SeaWorld's expert official, there were only "two circumstances [that] led to Ms. Brancheau's death":

> First, her hair was long, loose, and flowing out on the surface of the water and drifted into contact with Tilikum's rostrum and mouth. … Second, his curiosity with the hair led him to pull the hair out away from the pool ledge and Ms. Brancheau's body was pulled out along with her hair. Once she was in the water, Tilikum had a new object with which to play. From the moment he pulled her into the water until she drowned, Tilikum was

> never aggressive towards her. … The only thing that led to this event was a mistake made by Ms. Brancheau in allowing her long hair to float out into an area that Tilikum could grab in his curiosity. (OSHRC, 2012, p. 38)

The ponytail theory was contested from the beginning, with witness statements suggesting that it was Dawn's foot that Tilikum grabbed (Mclich, 2010). Dawn's fellow trainer, in a police interview, stated that "Tilikum does not have any toys that are similar to hair which would cause Tilikum to mistake Dawn Brancheau's hair for a toy" (Mclich, 2010, p. 34). Ultimately, the theory was debunked by the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission in 2012. The court afforded SeaWorld's ponytail theory "no weight," positing that the view that "Tilikum grabbed Ms. Brancheau by the hair out of curiosity because he was unfamiliar with it" was purely "speculative" with "no basis in fact" (OSHRC, 2012, p. 39).

Beyond the ponytail theory, there are other instances where the discourse shifts the blame to Dawn. Much emphasis is put on Dawn's experience, knowledge, and familiarity with Tilikum and SeaWorld's supposed 50-year track record, according to SeaWorld's vice president of zoological operations, of "literally millions of safe interactions … with killer whales" (Scarpuzzi, 2013, para. 5). For SeaWorld, this success is because routines and safety protocols are followed. Thus, it only makes sense that Dawn did *something*. Indeed, despite the rejection of the ponytail hypothesis, SeaWorld stands by what the OSHRC calls a "closed system" of logic, believing that

> all behavior is thus predictable. If an undesirable behavior occurs, it is because the trainer missed a known precursor. Ergo, the trainer is always at fault for the killer whale's undesirable behavior. In this closed system, any injuries sustained by a trainer will always be traceable to human error. It is not the operant conditioning program that is inadequate; it is the performance of the trainer that is flawed. (OSHRC, 2012, p. 35)

This logic leaves no room for questions of animal agency and diverts attention away from claims of captivity-induced aggression. The explanations put forth by fellow SeaWorld trainers also suggest that it was unintentional trainer error that led to Tilikum's actions. According to trainers, Tilikum grew agitated and "frustrated" because he was not receiving reinforcement for his behaviours: "There's no food left. She kept asking him for more and more behaviors. He wasn't getting reinforced for the behaviors that he was doing correctly. He probably was frustrated towards the end" (Cowperthwaite, 2013). Again, this narrative points to Dawn not following normal procedure, which led to Tilikum's abnormal behaviours. Despite Dawn being hailed as a "safety guru" who "was always double-checking and making sure that everyone was doing the right thing" (Cowperthwaite, 2013), former vice president of animal training, Thad Lacinak, believes that Dawn had developed a misplaced trust in Tilikum: "She never should have put herself in that vulnerable a position … One of the things we always talked about at SeaWorld was you never want to get totally comfortable with any animal" (Zimmerman, 2010, n.p.). In a television interview, Lacinak went so far as to say that "if [Dawn] was standing here right now" she would say that it "was her mistake in allowing that to happen" (Sterling, 2010). Lacinak's comments directly oppose those of Dawn herself, who told the Orlando Sentinel in 2006, "You can't put yourself in the water unless you trust [the whales] and they trust you" (as cited in Jacobson, 2010, para. 9). This narrative directs attention away from both animal agency and corporate responsibility towards an individual. As such, this narrative attempts to consolidate Tilikum's resistance within an anthropocentric worldview by positioning him as a misused object, mishandled on an individual level by Dawn. In this way, the apparatus surrounding Tilikum's captivity remains invisible to the public.

3.2 Accident

If Dawn was not at fault, then the question remains as to how Tilikum's actions can be accounted for. After all, without Dawn to blame, fault can only be placed on either Tilikum or SeaWorld itself, or both—that is, unless nobody is to blame. The narrative of "accident" appears in almost all cases of human deaths involving captive orcas. In the case of Daniel Dukes's death, blame was diffused by claims of "horseplay": "[Dukes] may have been a victim of what a whale would call horseplay, just playing around" (Couwels & Todd, 2010b, para. 32). Further, the year prior to Dawn's death, Keto, a SeaWorld-owned orca, was involved in the death of Alexis Martinez at Loro Parque in Spain. Alexis's death received minimal media coverage at the time, as park officials claimed that Keto's actions were not consistent with an attack (Montero, 2010). However, according to Alexis's partner, who viewed his body postmortem, the injuries were of a violent and brutal nature: "It seemed as though his chest had burst. I asked what had happened. I couldn't understand why they had told me he was fine" (Cowperthwaite, 2013). Two years before, Loro Parque trainer Claudia Vollhardt was hospitalized after being "dragged … underwater repeatedly" by a male orca Tekoa, leaving her with a "badly bruised chest and broken arm" (Sydney Morning Herald, 2007, para. 1). Park spokesperson Patricia Delponti claimed the incident was purely accidental and not an attack: "The whale did not bite her. If it had, she would have lost her arm" (Sydney Morning Herald, 2007, para. 7).

In the case of Tilikum, this accident narrative was first put forth by a sheriff department official in a statement hours after Dawn's death: "While this incident remains the subject of an ongoing death investigation, there are no signs of foul play … All evidence and witness statements indicate that the death was a tragic accident" (Couwels & Todd, 2010a, para. 6). In a press conference alongside SeaWorld Orlando vice president Dan Brown, Orange County

Sheriff's Office spokesperson Jim Solomons stated: "[Dawn] apparently slipped or fell in the tank and was fatally injured by one of the whales" (Couwels & Todd, 2010b, para. 2). As previously suggested, Dawn's autopsy results concluded the same: the cause of death was "drowning" and the manner of death was an "accident" (Mclich, 2010, p. 2). News coverage in the weeks following the incident maintained the "accident" narrative as well (see Edwards & Curtis, 2010; CBS News, 2010; Mariano, 2010; Schneider, 2010b; Weisenthal, 2010). This narrative completely rejects any notion of blame, on the part of Dawn and SeaWorld at large, and rests upon SeaWorld's claims of "literally millions of safe interactions … with killer whales" (Scarpuzzi, 2013, para. 5).

However, claims of accident contradict the markedly high percentage of captive whales involved in violent incidents at SeaWorld parks. Indeed, Dawn's death is only the most recent "unsafe interaction" involving SeaWorld's orcas. In 1971, SeaWorld secretary Annette Eckis was injured during a publicity stunt: "The whale, Shamu, grasped the right leg of bikini-clad Annette Eckis and refused to let go. Two trainers jumped into the pool and one pried open the 4,000-pound mammal's mouth" (Toledo Blade, 1971, p. 2). In 1984, a trainer was pinned against a wall by two unidentified orcas (Mike Lee, 2010). During a performance the same year, trainer Joanne Hay was grabbed by Kandu V and pinned to a wall (Mike Lee, 2010). Kandu V was involved in a similar pinning incident in a 1986 performance, and the next year, she fractured a trainer's neck by landing on her during a training session (Mike Lee, 2010). In 1987, Orky II seriously injured a trainer after landing on him during a jump (Prescott Courier, 1987). That year, journalists reported that there were at least 14 injuries attributed to unnamed orcas over the course of a five-month period, few of which were picked up by the news (J. Scott, 1987). Kasatka bit a trainer in 1993, and six years later, she pulled a trainer by the leg during a show (Repard, 2006). In 2003,

Splash and Orkid pulled a trainer into the tank, injuring her arm (McCord, 2002). In 2004, Kyuquot forced a trainer under water repeatedly (ABC News, 2004). In 2005, Taku began acting aggressively with a trainer by repeatedly "bumping" him, causing unspecified injuries (Sherman, 2005, para. 2). In a 2006 performance, Kasatka bit another trainer and "took him to the bottom of the tank twice" (Repard, 2006, para. 1). The same year, Orkid was involved in another trainer incident where she grabbed a trainer's foot, dragging him underwater and holding him there (Rodgers, 2007).

Given this extensive history of violence at SeaWorld alone, claims of accident are misleading, counterfactual and even disingenuous. As Bonilla-Escobar and Gutierrez (2014) argue, from the perspective of accident theory, "a common misconception exists where injuries are thought to be the same as accidents; however, accidents are largely used as chance events, without taken in consideration that all these are preventable" and if such events "are not limited to actions determined by fate or luck and instead have causes that are predictable and preventable, it should be assumed that they are not accidental" (p. 132-3). In the case of SeaWorld's 55-year history, many incidents have occurred, involving different parks, different whales, and different trainers. The first 911 call made by a SeaWorld employee after Dawn was pulled into the water speaks to the expected danger of Tilikum: "We have a trainer in the water with one of our whales. The whale they're not supposed to be in the water with" (Cowperthwaite, 2013). Not only were trainers told not to get in the water with Tilikum, he was specifically set apart from the other whales for all safety protocols. According to SeaWorld Orlando's standard operating procedures manual for animal training, "any mention of killer whales implies all whales except for Tilikum," who was relegated to his own section, "Section X" (cited in OSHRC, 2012). Guidelines for interactions with Tilikum were strict and specific,

allowing only the most senior trainers, such as Dawn, to be in close proximity to him. Given Kelti Byrne's death, Tilikum's danger was well known. In fact, during the OSHRC trial, it was decided that "SeaWorld's safety training program, both for killer whales and for its trainers, is inadequate as a means of feasible abatement" of a "recognized hazard" (OSHRC, 2012, p. 40). SeaWorld has continually defended themselves against these claims, advocating that trainer-orca contact "is essential to their safety" (Morgan Lee, 2015). As such, claims of accident function to distract from SeaWorld's shortcomings, failures, and prior knowledge as to the dangers of contact with captive orcas.

Furthermore, this accident narrative does not acknowledge the agency of the whales in these incidents. Instead, the whales are positioned as naive and unaware of the harm they are causing since they are only "playing," while the humans become unfortunate casualties of animals' ineptitudes. This narrative works in tandem with lexical choices that highlight Tilikum's size. As the "largest orca in captivity" measuring in at "22 feet 7 inches long and weighing in at 12,300 pounds," Tilikum is defined by his size in the majority of media responses to Dawn's death (M. Evans, 2010, para. 1). Tilikum is described more with the adjective "massive" (see Edwards & Curtis, 2010; CBS News, 2012; Brigante, 2011; Schiavo, 2013; Pedicini, 2017; Bowerman, 2015) than other descriptors such as those that might focus on intelligence or emotional acuity, which positions Tilikum as a lumbering giant who knows not his own power. Indeed, for humans, small in physical scale compared to whales, it is impossible not to feel inferior when confronted by them.

This dichotomy between small but mighty "man" and large but dumb "beast" recalls narratives such as *Jaws* and *Moby Dick*—as Wadiwel (2015) proposes, the "way to make sense" of such narratives is by noticing the animal's "unsettled 'agency'":

> for it is never clear whether Moby Dick is a rational agent or not, and the text oscillates between treating the whale as merely a "dumb animal" and, simultaneously, as a "leviathan" with a reasoning, calculating mind. … an intelligence that hangs in question; as possessing an instrumental rationality that must exceed that which could be attributed to an "ordinary" animal. (p. 268)

There is clearly, as Wadiwel puts it, an "anxiety at stake here" in being confronted by a reversal of the power/powerless-human/animal dichotomies— "perhaps," like Melville's whale, Tilikum too "is reasoning like a sovereign" (p. 269). As former SeaWorld trainer John Hargove recollects, upon hearing of Dawn's fate: "He said that—'And he still has her.' And I just was so disturbed by that, and the reality of how powerless we are" (Cowperthwaite, 2013). The disturbance Hargove feels is linked to this notion of the "'rogue' animal" that Wadiwel (2015) defines: "'Intelligence' is important here in understanding the threat of the rogue animal, since the potential capacity of the animal to impose a 'human like violence'—the capacity to reason, to plan, to strategize, to track, to stalk—is tied to its terror" (p. 269). Amongst primates, cetaceans are widely acknowledged, in the dominant speciesist worldview, as possessing the most "human-like" intelligence and as one of few species with whom humans "share a select community of intelligent life on Earth" (Callicott, 1997, p. 24). This desire to uplift these select species, which not so coincidently fall under "charismatic megafauna" (Albert, Luque, & Courchamp, 2018), is indicative of a speciesist hierarchization of moral worth. Because of this view, research into cetacean cognition appears much more willing to attribute qualities usually withheld from other species.[37] The so-called superior intelligence of these species is then exploited to market

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[37] For instance, Marino (2011) states that despite the cortical differences between humans and cetaceans, the unique

encounters with these animals; SeaWorld boasts of orcas who impress trainers "every day" with their "intelligence by learning new and difficult behaviors very quickly" (SeaWorld Public Relations, 2018, n.p.).[38] However, when these animals turn on trainers, their actions are attributed to accident, or instinct, as Section 3.2 discusses, not intention.

To recognize that Tilikum made a purposeful choice in using his strength, power, and intelligence to dominate Dawn would be to admit that human supremacy can be surmounted by nonhumans. It would be to acknowledge that these animals are not simply "*seen*" but are "*seeing*" (Derrida, 2008, p. 12). It would be to ask, as Derrida (2008) does, "what does this bottomless gaze offer to my sight [*donne à voir*]? What does it ''say'' to me … when that truth *allows me to see and be seen* through the eyes of the other, in the *seeing* and not just *seen* eyes of the other?" (p. 12). The answer, for Derrida is clear:

> with every bottomless gaze, as with the eyes of the other, the gaze called ''animal'' offers to my sight the abyssal limit of the human: the inhuman or the ahuman, the ends of man, that is to say, the bordercrossing from which vantage man dares to announce himself to himself, thereby calling himself by the name that he believes he gives himself. (p. 12)

Aquariums and zoos are in a double-bind. These companies seek to sell to customers the idea that these animals possess power and intelligence and, through intimate encounters, these animals might "look at them, and address them" (Derrida, 2008, p. 13). However, as Berger (1980) states, these places "cannot but disappoint":

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structure of cetacean brains suggests capacities for high-level processes, such as "self-awareness, and generally, abstract intelligence" (p. 1071). Further, according to Greggor (2012), cetaceans exhibit the capacities for social learning and social systems, amounting to what can be defined as culture.

[38] In using the word "behaviors" as opposed to "tricks" to describe actions the animals are trained to perform, SeaWorld leads the reader to into seeing the actions as part of the animals' natural behavioural repertoire.

> The public purpose of zoos is to offer visitors the opportunity of looking at animals. Yet nowhere in a zoo can a stranger encounter the look of an animal. At most, the animal's gaze flickers and passes on. They look sideways. They look blindly beyond. They scan mechanically. They have been immunised to encounter, because nothing can any more occupy a *central* place in their attention. (p. 28)

The various measures to subdue resistance in captive animals result in this disappointment—"the ultimate consequence of their marginalization" (Berger, 1980, p. 28). Nevertheless, as is the case with Dawn, she certainly encountered the look of Tilikum. When an animal such as Tilikum, proclaimed to be so powerful and intelligent, addresses a human in a violent way, this absolvitory narrative seeks to deny their agency and reduce the events to "accidental" in order to protect human sovereignty and cover over what it truly might mean to "*be seen* through the eyes of the other" (Derrida, 2008, p. 12).

3.3 Animality

The third narrative concerns Tilikum's "wildness," positioning his actions as not so much accidental, but unfortunate, yet not unexpected side effects of his animal nature. This narrative seeks to resolve the aforementioned double bind by positioning animals' violent actions as the result of an innate animality. The focus on Tilikum as a "wild" animal engages in a discourse of animality, defined by Cary Wolfe (2003), as a "constellation of signifiers to structure how [humans] address others of *whatever* sort (not just nonhuman animals)—the living and breathing creatures who fall outside the taxonomy of Homo sapiens" (p. xx). This discourse is implicated in upholding the human-animal binary on which anthropocentrism and speciesism rest. As Noske (1997) elaborates:

> At a time when Western science is revealing an increasing number of aspects of commonality between humans and animals, we nevertheless tend to define ourselves as distinctly non-animal. … Animals embod[y] the antithesis of all that [is] valued and esteemed. It seems that modern Western society more than any other emphasizes the 'Otherness' of the non-human. (p. 40)

Animals may be, as Noske suggests, the antithesis of value in their own regard, but not in terms of symbolic, material, and cultural use value for humans; in that regard, animal life is exponentially valuable. As CAS scholar John Sorenson (2008) proposes, these spaces—"prisons for animals where the public can visit and observe the suffering of inmates"—are "rooted in philosophical traditions that elevate human beings in general over the rest of the natural world and separate them from it," whereby they have come "to function as one important sign of superiority of particular human beings" (p. 198).[39]

SeaWorld, as many like facilities do, claims that there is extensive "reciprocal trust" established between human trainers and captive animals, contributing to the "strong, rewarding relationship[s] between" them (SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment, Inc., n.d.-b). Nevertheless, this "trust" appears to be always already tenuous, wherein these same animals are said to be, usually when conflict arises, "wild animals … not tame" (Tompkins, 2010, para. 2). In this way, Tilikum's positive attributes, his intelligence, trainability, and gregariousness, can be separated from his animal nature—it is human involvement that ostensibly allows him to somewhat, but

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[39] The history of so-called "human zoos" and "freak shows" intersects with the history of animal captivity (Boëtsch & Blanchard, 2014, p. 191-3), but a full discussion on the complexity of this intersection, and the distinct differences between the practices, is beyond the scope of this project. See Boëtsch & Blanchard (2014), Johnson (2020), and Abbattista (2021) for commentary on how animality, disability, and race intersect and where they do not in terms of human exhibition.

not completely, surmount his wildness. For instance, one journalist describes Tilikum as "the plushy-ready wild beast trained and monetized but never wholly tamed" (Wallace, 2016, para. 4). This narrative of Tilikum's innate wildness is further supported by several researchers, who claim that his violent actions are compatible with the behaviour of free-living orcas. Whale researcher David Duffus, a witness in the OSHRC trial, suggests that, "Tilikum's aggression is consistent with predatory behavior, seizing prey from shore, holding prey underwater, shaking prey items are all commonly encountered in wild whales" (OSHRC, 2012, p. 40). Further, Duffus states that Dawn's death exemplified "the same behavior seen … in the wild with killer whales" (OSHRC, 2012, p. 40). This claim that Tilikum's behaviour is "predatory" has a clear problem: Tilikum did not attempt to eat Dawn. Steve McCulloch, founder of the Marine Mammal Research and Conservation Program at Florida Atlantic University, states that Tilikum "may have been playing" and that orcas are "very large powerful marine mammals … [that] exhibit this type of behavior in the wild" (CBC News, 2010, para. 14). However, these claims do not address an undeniable caveat to these "wild" behaviors: in free-living orcas, these behaviours are rarely directed towards humans and have resulted in no recorded human deaths.

The discourse of animality as it applies to captive animals is often contradictory, functioning through a simultaneous process of what Noske (1997) calls "de-animalization" (p. 18) and animalization. De-animalization occurs in various ways, wherein they are, as Noske states, "being alienated from their own products which consist of either their offspring or (parts of) their own body" (p. 18). Whales such as Tilikum are often deprived of "social contacts among themselves" (Noske, 1997, p. 18)—after Dawn's death, Tilikum reportedly faced increased isolation, while still being made to provide sperm for breeding purposes (Gorman, 2010). Noske (1997) illuminates the "grotesque" result of this alienation: "The body which

makes up an important part of the animal 'self' used to be steered largely by the animal itself but has now become a machine in the hands of management and is actually working against the animal's own interests" (p. 18). On a symbolic level, Tilikum is de-animalized through stuffed animals and even a "Shamu Bubble Blaster" (SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment, Inc., 2021, n.p.). Further, synecdoche in advertisements reduces the animals to the parts that customers are keen to interact with: "face-to-fin," "fin-tastic," (SeaWorld Orlando Blog, 2018a, n.p.), and "shake fins with some of the oceans' greatest communicators" (SeaWorld Orlando Blog, 2018b, n.p.).

Tilikum is also clearly animalized—there is always a keen awareness of Tilikum's animality being an ever present, yet unknown threat to those humans around him. This animality is what justifies his continued subordination to human control in the first place. SeaWorld advertises that customers can "get nose to bottle nose with a new friend that will in your heart forever," enjoy "face-to-face encounters with playful otters and curious marmosets," or "get up close with some finned, flippered, or feathered friends" (SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment, Inc., n.d.-a, n.p.). Yet, "behind the insistent appeals to fun, affectionate relationships, appreciation and education for children," as Sorenson (2008) states, "is the harsh reality of captivity for these animals" (p. 206), including the risk of human life when they choose to resist. SeaWorld seeks to absolve itself of culpability by suggesting that it is a given that everyone knows that these so-called wild animals pose an inherent and unavoidable danger. This contradiction illustrates how the limits of this discourse are manipulated to control the "truth" of animal captivity.

The supposed "truth" in regards to cetacean captivity and the animal "nature" of these beings is particularly problematic. Tilikum's actions, behaviours, physiology, and genetics have become an important part of the standard by which captive orca behaviour is assessed. Much of the research on captive orcas in the past 50 years has been conducted using SeaWorld whales,

including Tilikum (Robeck et al., 2004; S. Clark, Odell, & Lacinak, 2000; S. Clark & Odell, 1999). These studies have been cited in further research on free-living whales as well. As a result, Tilikum, who was, prior to his death, the largest whale in captivity, stands as the foremost symbol of "whaleness," and the perception of Tilikum's actions as being natural becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. Further yet, as the unwilling sperm donor for at least 21 pregnancies over his 35-year lifespan, Tilikum is, in the genetic sense, the foundation on which a significant portion of orca captivity rests (Fielding, 2013). What this means is that Tilikum has become the yardstick by which his own actions and the actions of other orcas are measured. However, as former SeaWorld trainer Mark Simmons states, it is a "flaw is to assume that all killer whales are like Tilikum" and that "none of the other killer whales at SeaWorld who are in that system are that way" (Cowperthwaite, 2013). In this sense, claims of what is natural or instinctual to Tilikum and his kin are unsupportable as their actions can only be understood as inextricably enmeshed within the apparatus of captivity.

Overall, this narrative of animality does, in a sense, question the acceptability of cetacean captivity on the basis that orcas are innately dangerous to humans. In fact, this is the narrative on which the OSHRC case rested, claiming that working with orcas involves unavoidable risks due to an inherent "element of unpredictability" no matter the training and safety protocols involved (OSHRC, 2012, p. 40). The OSHRC ruling ultimately prohibited SeaWorld trainers from performing waterwork, with SeaWorld appealing this ruling unsuccessfully in 2012, 2013, and 2014 (Kirby, 2012; Kolker, 2013; Kuo, 2014). It seems as though SeaWorld finally conceded, as in 2016, SeaWorld announced it would be ending orca breeding programs and "phasing out … theatrical orca whale shows" (Manby, 2016, para. 3). While the ruling is ultimately concerned with the safety of trainers, not the animals, the resistant actions of Tilikum should be recognized

as playing a significant role in advancing changes for others of his species. In this regard, Tilikum, as Allen and von Essen (2018) propose, is an "agent[] of resistance and, as such, [a] co-contributor[] to a project of total liberation" (p. 6).

Nevertheless, this narrative of animality is still part of the apparatus that maintains the anthropocentric and speciesist divides on which captivity is justified. Afterall, animality does not imply agency and nor do OSHRC or SeaWorld's decisions to phase out whale performances. OSHRC's decision, which SeaWorld begrudgingly complies with, only serves to show the danger in engaging with a certain nonhuman species and set boundaries to protect human safety; these boundaries already exist for countless so-called "dangerous" species who remain subject to exploitation and death (Mepham, 2016). Despite humans' attempts to understand and codify animal life to its limits, there always remains a degree of "ignorance and fear" when humans interact with animals (Berger, 1980, p. 5). This fear exists due to what John Berger (1980) calls a "narrow abyss of non-comprehension" between humans and animals (p. 5). As a result, narratives of innate wildness and animal "nature" enter the discourse to address this fear without questioning the always conditional nature of human supremacy. Without such language to tell us that we "should not believe our eyes" (Medoro, 2014, p. 213) when we are confronted by Tilikum's resistance, we might begin to think that Tilikum might be "reasoning like a sovereign" (Wadiwel, 2015, p. 269). This type of thinking throws into question not only the morality of Tilikum's confinement, but also the uniqueness of humanity that our supremacy over the "wholly other [we] call 'animal'" (Derrida, 2008, p. 11) truly depends on.

3.4 Traumatized

Tilikum was largely considered by SeaWorld employees to be "different" from the other whales, both in the physical sense and in his personality (Schneider, 2010a, n.p.). On the day of Dawn's death, Tilikum was observed to be "not responding to directions" and was "behaving like an ornery child" (Schneider, 2010b, para. 6). Many may have believed the corporate spiel that Dawn's death was an accident caused by her error—however, some saw the day Dawn died as the day Tilikum finally "lost it" after 29 years in captivity. Few of the initial responses to Dawn's death make comment on Tilikum's trauma, assumedly in part out of respect for Dawn. However, a *Time* article published the day after Dawn's death asks the question others were hesitant to ask: "What Made Tilikum Snap?' (Kluger, 2010, n.p.).

Captivity-induced trauma is the fourth and final narrative that I will discuss. Through recognizing Tilikum as a subject with a psychological life, this narrative appears to contrast those that avoid any mention of captivity and functions as the impetus for the large-scale questioning of cetacean captivity that occurred following Dawn's death. Questions arise as to Tilikum's culpability and SeaWorld's own complicity in orchestrating the trauma he experiences. In the years following *Blackfish*'s release, what some call the "Blackfish Effect" began to take hold (Chattoo, 2016; Zimmerman, 2014; Zaveri, 2018; R. Clark, 2013), referring to the large-scale public response, resulting financial impacts, and corporate policy changes faced by SeaWorld and other captive orca programs following the film's release (Parsons & Rose, 2018). As C. Campbell (2013) states, "[*Blackfish*] gets at the root of how the person or thing became a murderer." For director Gabriela Cowperthwaite, *Blackfish* is about understanding "what kind of hand [humans] had in possibly creating an animal that is capable of doing these things" (C. Campbell, 2013). An interview with Tilikum's former trainer Christopher Porter marks the point

in the film when this narrative of psychological trauma is directly addressed:

> There's something wrong with Tilikum that there's—there's something wrong, and that's when you have a relationship with an animal, and you understand that he's killing, not to be a savage. He's not killing because he's just crazy. He's not killing because he doesn't know what he's doing. He's killing because he's frustrated, and he's got aggravations, and he doesn't know how to—he has no outlet for it. (Cowperthwaite, 2013)

The documentary employs this narrative of captivity-induced trauma to highlight the destruction and harm that captivity reaps upon Tilikum and other orca whales, contrasting narratives previously discussed that discount Tilikum's agency. However, as this analysis will examine, this notion of trauma is bound up in and complicated by various speciesist discourses, such as monstrosity and "rogue animals."

Most, if not all, captive animals exhibit some form of maladaptive or stereotypic behaviour as a consequence of their captivity. Research suggests that common nonhuman behaviours, such as avoidance, hypervigilance, and fearfulness, are analogous to those seen in humans who have experienced trauma or prolonged suffering (Ferdowsian & Merskin, 2012; see also, Cohen, Kaplan, et al., 2007; Cohen, Matar, et al. 2006). In response to fear, animals may "suppress signs of acute and chronic pain … in attempts to enhance survival," which can result in psychological after effects (Ferdowsian & Merskin, 2012, p. 452). This frustration can be understood as a result of the very nature of zoos and aquariums, as Berger (1980) explains, "isolated from each other and without interaction between species" the animals "become utterly dependent upon their keepers" causing "most of their responses have been changed. What was central to their interest has been replaced by a passive waiting for a series of arbitrary outside inventions" (p. 25) The consequences of prolonged isolation and limitations on their agency,

cetaceans, as with other captive animals, exhibit stereotypic behaviours. Unlike land and air animals, however, cetaceans held captive in in-land water parks and zoos have zero possibility of escape, meaning that stereotypies are especially common in captive cetaceans and contribute to high rates of mortality and morbidity (Marino, 2019). While researchers and facilities with an interest in maintaining marine animal captivity might suggest that these stereotypies can be overcome through further research and clearer understandings of cetacean biology, even with careful attention to reduction, the total elimination of stereotypies in captive cetaceans has proven to be unattainable (Shyne, 2006). Further research into the ongoing psychological trauma induced by captivity, not simply into the so-called stereotypic effects of it, is needed. However, the reasons for what could have made Tilikum "snap," as *Blackfish* attempts to illustrate, are not hard to see—captivity is reprehensible and negatively affects nonhumans on the whole.

From a CAS perspective that recognizes nonhumans as sentient agents, Tilikum's trauma is cognizable. Tilikum's life at Sealand is described as noticeably questionable, involving "literally no stimulation" as the whales were "just in this dark metal 20 foot by 30 foot pool for two thirds of their life" (Cowperthwaite, 2013). The documentary highlights Tilikum's size as causing him increased frustration and stress: "Tilikum, the poor guy is so large. He couldn't get away because he just was not as mobile relative to the smaller and more agile females. And where is he going to run, there's no place to run" (Cowperthwaite, 2013). As a result, Tilikum is said to have "spent a lot of time in isolation. … he didn't spend a lot of time ... with the other whales" (Cowperthwaite, 2013). Further, whale-on-whale violence is positioned repeatedly as a direct result of captivity: "this aggression became very severe, and in fact whales have died in captivity because of this aggression"; "there's hyper-aggression, a lot of violence, a lot of killing in captivity that you don't ever see in the wild"; and "Whale-on-whale aggression was just part

of … the daily existence" (Cowperthwaite, 2013). Rhetorical and leading questions are then employed to incrementally entice the audience into believing their eyes: "Can you imagine being in a small concrete enclosure for your life, when you're used to swimming 100 miles a day?"; "If you were on a bathtub for 25 years, don't you think you get a little irritated, aggravated, maybe a little psychotic?" (Cowperthwaite, 2013).

Towards the close of the film, the claims of captivity-induced trauma become more forthright. In an interview, John Jett, former SeaWorld trainer, remarks, "I've been expecting it since the second person was killed. I've been expecting somebody to be killed by Tilikum. I'm surprised it took as long as it did" (Cowperthwaite, 2013). Not all trainers believed this hypothesis, as *Blackfish* highlights; former SeaWorld trainer Mark Simmons states,

> The initial grab was not an act of aggression. This is not a crazed animal. … Recognize that those that say this is a crazed animal that acted out and grabbed Dawn maliciously, they want to prove the theorem that captivity makes animals crazy, and that is just false. (Cowperthwaite, 2013)

However, directly following Simmons's comments, the scene cuts to Lori Marino, neuroscientist and marine animal expert, making the direct claim that "all whales in captivity have a bad life. They're all psychologically traumatized. So they are ticking time bombs. It's not just Tilikum" (Cowperthwaite, 2013). What Marino clarifies is that this claim of psychological trauma is not about individual "crazy" animals, but a system that is unavoidably destructive to the mental wellbeing of these animals. The point is thus not about stopping animals like Tilikum from snapping, but rather about dismantling the inherently traumatizing system of captivity itself.

Nevertheless, in the initial years after Dawn's death, there was much disagreement on Tilikum's fate, and as a result, the discourse often positioned Tilikum as an irremediable monster.

In one sense, this language of "monstrosity" ties closely in with the narrative of trauma-induced aggression, in that it appears to recognize Tilikum's agency. However, the point of view is focused more intensely on Tilikum's culpability in a human death and what forms of justice might be necessary to hold him accountable. Indeed, there were many questions as to whether Tilikum should be euthanized. For instance, Samantha Berg, former SeaWorld trainer, states, "imagine if you had a pit bull who had killed. I mean, that animal would have likely been put down" (Cowperthwaite, 2013). Russ Rector, ex-dolphin trainer and marine mammal activist, asserts that "Tilikum is a monster" whom SeaWorld will not euthanize because he is "a breeder … worth millions" (Leinwand, 2010, para. 8). Rector further explains Tilikum's "monster" status, remarking that "Tilikum is a casualty of captivity; it has destroyed his mind and turned him demented … If he was a horse, dog, bear, cat or elephant he would already have been put down after the first kill, and this is his third" (Pilkington, 2010, para. 12). Many felt that Tilikum had gotten off too easy for his involvement in Dawn's death, despite Dawn's sister stating that she "would not want anything done to that whale" (Ferran & Goldman, 2010, para. 12). This rhetoric of monstrosity recalls the origins of the public display of marine animals. For instance, as Sorenson (2008) states, P.T. Barnum already profited off exploiting the "idea of monstrous human 'others'" by "playing on images of savagery and primitivism," so it was a simple step for him to see how "these 'monsters of the deep'" could "profitably augment his existing attractions" (p. 196). While contemporary marine exhibits appear on the surface to be far removed from this history of exploiting public curiosity in seeing "marine monsters," Sorenson questions this: "To us, now, it is not the whales who are the 'monsters' in this story. But in the century and a half since Barnum displayed his captive whale, how much has changed?" (p. 196).

Given these representations of Tilikum's monstrosity, the answer to Sorenson's question

appears to be "not much." According to a poll by the Orlando Sentinel in the weeks following Dawn's death, 21% of respondents believed that Tilikum should be "destroyed" (Orlando Sentinel, 2010). The poll includes several public responses in support of Tilikum's euthanization—one writer asks, "Why, after knowing Tilikum's history, was he not euthanized in 1991 after drowning another trainer? I realize that a killer whale is much more expensive than a pit bull or chimpanzee, but what price do we place on a human life?" (Orlando Sentinel, 2010, n.p.). Another commenter states simply that "[a]s a society, we euthanize dogs and alligators that kill or injure humans" and therefore '[t]he killer whale known as Tilikum should be destroyed" for his actions (Orlando Sentinel, 2010, n.p.). Lexical choices in news segments and articles similarly drawn attention to Tilikum's malefactor status, calling him "a six-time killer whale has lived up to its name" (Cowperthwaite, 2013); a "serial' killer whale" (Gardner & Tweedy, 2010); a "[s]ix-ton 'rogue'" (Gardner & Tweedy, 2010); "the homicidal killer whale" (Brower, 2013); a "mass murderer" (Nelles, 2012); and Keiko's "evil twin" (Brower, 2013).

The rogue figure—"the animal that no longer fears the human; indeed may actively hunt and attack the human"—is evoked (Wadiwel, 2015, p. 269). As Wadiwel (2015) observes:

> The usual cynical response to the "rogue animal" is to assume it is ridiculous to imagine that a non human animal might be possessed by violence and direct it with instrumental purpose. Rather than be surprised by the rogue animal, I would suggest that we need to be surprised at the near universality of human arrogance here. This is the power of naming after all. To name an animal that may possess sovereign power as a rogue is to declare this animal exceptional (p. 270)

I might complicate this rogue figure further, or rather, simplify it. While Wadiwel posits that the roguish animal is a "surprise," "questionable (laughable even)," and "beyond the norm," the term

rogue is actually commonly used to describe nonhuman animals. In fact, "rogue" is defined by the OED in relation to animals several times: "a wayward, unmanageable, or lazy horse," "an elephant living apart from the herd and having savage or destructive tendencies" or "any wild animal of similar character," and "designating a large wild animal living apart from the herd and having savage or destructive tendencies" (Oxford University Press, n.d.-d, para. 1). Therefore, I suggest that these representations of Tilikum as a rogue do not necessarily consider that he "might be *possessed* by violence and *direct it* with instrumental *purpose*" (Wadiwel, 2015, p. 270, emphasis added). Apart from assigning him blame for Dawn's death, Tilikum's agency goes largely unmentioned. The comparison to "euthaniz[ing] dogs and alligators that kill or injure humans" to advocate that "Tilikum should be destroyed" (Orlando Sentinel, 2010, n.p.) clearly shows a disinterest in recognizing the agency of nonhumans as morally relevant. The killing of dogs that hurt humans is treated as generally acceptable in North America, as it comes down to status of animals as property. The value of the animal as well as damage claims play significant roles in decisions of this sort (Epstein, 2001, p. 31). In Tilikum's case, it is unlikely that a decision would be made to "destroy" him given the significant value he represents to SeaWorld.[40] One article alone plays with this narrative in a more ostensibly critical context, stating that "Tilikum, simultaneously a murderer and a captive, remains behind bars of plastic and chlorine, awaiting a day in court that will never come" (Nelles, 2012, para. 33). However, recent articles still appear to enact this narrative without self-reflection, calling Tilikum a "murdering 'killer whale'" (Sachteleben, 2017, para. 2) and a "murderous orca … infamous for murdering up to three innocent humans" (Acker, 2016, para. 2). In this regard, while "murder"

[40] Tilikum is claimed to be worth "millions" in addition to the value of his sperm for future breading programs (CBS News, 2010).

recognizes a degree of intention on Tilikum's part, whether Tilikum is an agent who could respond to his exploitation with "purpose" is not of concern.

The question that arises here is that if we attribute agency and intention to nonhumans such as Tilikum, are we not then obligated to hold these nonhumans accountable for their actions? In other words, did Tilikum not just *kill* Dawn, but *murder* her? This question of whether animals can commit murder deserves a degree of attention that surpasses the limits of this project; however, I will engage with the question briefly. There is no evidence to suggest that Tilikum premeditated his attack on Dawn and thus, by definition, murdered her, although evidence to the contrary is equally absent. At this point in time, Tilikum is not considered a person under the law and therefore cannot unlawfully murder a human—in other words, there are no laws that prohibit Tilikum himself, or any other animal, from killing a human.[41] In the Middle Ages, some animals faced criminal trials for their violent actions (E. Evans, 1906/2013).[42] However, in the present day, a trial of this nature would potentially set a precedent by which cetacean personhood would become recognized on a legal level. For SeaWorld, this precedent would be inherently problematic, as their financial success depends on the belief, and legal backing, that nonhumans are not persons, but to be used as humans see fit. Further yet, it would require an overhaul, ultimately, of the view that animals do not resist, do not have agency and are not worthy of moral consideration.

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[41] As mentioned, there are ways in which the law leads to animals being "destroyed" for harming or killing humans, as is the case with dogs, but this is in terms of the animal as a human's property, not the animal themselves having culpability or "guilt." There are laws that seek to limit human-wildlife conflict (Nyhus, 2016), but again they point more so to animals' statuses as objects than as persons. Nevertheless, it is often the case that animals who harm humans, or even threaten harm, are killed without the presumption of innocence, as is the case with Harambe.

[42] There are various interpretations of the phenomenon of animal trials, with some scholars arguing that there was recognition of nonhuman agency and others not. See Dinzelbacher (2002) for an overview of these different interpretations.

However, the question of personhood appears as a double-bind for Tilikum as well: if whales such as Tilikum are granted personhood, then Tilikum might reasonably be held, as persons are, responsible for his actions and be subject to criminal prosecution (Boyle, 2010). Considering this double-bind, the question of self-defence would need to be raised. Murder under duress is a defence that has only recent begun to be recognized as potentially viable under human law and remains largely controversial (Diamond, 2002), such as Chrystul Kizer's ongoing case (Holcombe, 2020).[43] However, the implication here is that these animals' actions could be said to be justifiable as self-defence given the terms of their involuntary confinement. Nevertheless, even if Tilikum was found guilty for Dawn's death, his 33 years of involuntary captivity must be considered then as time served. Overall, the question of non-human personhood is at large a complex issue riddled with pitfalls. As Bryant (2008) argues, the status of "legal personhood" necessitates "endless, fruitless proofs that animals bear such substantial similarity to humans" (p. 253). However, in a speciesist worldview, these proofs are negated, ignored, and discredited, because humans are not only "heavily invested in defining themselves in opposition to animals" but are also "equally heavily invested in using" nonhumans (Bryant, 2008, p. 253). Therefore, I point again to Deckha's (2021) concept of "beingness" as an alternative to personhood that is not "benchmarked to the purportedly paradigmatic human actor" (p. 158). As Deckha (2021) summarizes, "in highlighting the relationality of animals, beingness would direct juridical attention to the multiple ways in which animals are *made vulnerable*" (p. 120, emphasis added).While not providing a direct answer to whether Tilikum would be

[43] At 17 years old, Chrystul Kizer was arrested for killing the man who was sex trafficking her. Kizer's lawyers put forward the case that her actions were in self-defense, a proposal that was initially denied but ultimately appealed, with the court finding that Kizer should be able to mount a claim of self-defense (Contrera, 2021).

considered a “murderer” or not, approaching this question from a recognition of Tilikum’s beingness and viewing him as an embodied, vulnerable, and “relational legal being” would bring his “experiences into full juridical view at the same time that it stresses the enormous damage done to animals when they are denied their relations of childhood and other family bonds as they languish in exploitative relationships of commodification” (Deckha, 2021, p. 130). Humans already incarcerate millions of animals who have done nothing more than be part of a species that humans enjoy keeping captive. The degree of murder wielded against nonhumans so vastly overshadows the deaths of humans caused by animals to the point that the question of animal murder appears more so than anything to trivialize the context of their unwilling captivity and the mental duress under which these animals are, again, unwillingly placed. I do not see any need to hold animals accountable for fighting back against those who exploit and kill them *en masse*; to quote Noske (1997), “humans are in no position to judge” (p. 78). As a result, instances such as these expose the problematic nature applying notions of personhood to animals.

Ultimately, *Blackfish* effectively employed this narrative of captivity-caused trauma to explain Dawn’s death, which was instrumental in bringing about a shift in perspective on Tilikum’s actions. Indeed, in the years following *Blackfish*’s release, the discourse on Tilikum has shifted significantly, with increased references to Tilikum not only the fault of captivity but also Tilikum’s own agency. Following Tilikum’s death in 2017, the majority of his obituaries made lexical choices that positioned him as being damaged in some way by his captivity. For example, Barkham (2017) states, “if you were taken from your mother and reduced to a life chewing a concrete cage, you might become slightly psychotic” (para. 7). Further, Bekhechi (2017) writes, “confinement drove [Tilikum] mad and made him lash out in frustration” (para. 5). There is also a shift towards acknowledging Tilikum’s own role in the global movement against

cetacean captivity: “We will remember him for his unintended advocacy role, championing the cause of others held captive” (Lusseau, 2017, para. 7). Furthermore, as the “obituary for Tilikum, SeaWorld’s saddest orca” states, Tilikum’s “grim existence” had a profound impact: “While his death in a concrete cell marks the end of his diminished existence as a source of profit for SeaWorld, it is our hope that it also marks the beginning of a new future for animals incarcerated at the abusement park” (Bekhechi, 2017, para. 5). As such, the impetus of *Blackfish* in SeaWorld ending both its breeding program and orca performance indicates the potential for counter discourses to make real-life impacts for individual animals. However, this perceptual shift on cetacean captivity depends on the broad recognition of their cognition. As such, attention focuses on the effects of captivity on cetaceans alone, reinforcing speciesism by not considering the ethical implications for all captive animals. In this way, the anthropocentric line of moral consideration is simply shifted slightly downwards to include cetaceans, while still excluding the vast majority of animal life.

Chapter 4: Conclusion

I conclude this project by returning to the problem posed at the outset of this project: the struggle of making concrete changes for nonhumans from within an undeniably speciesist, exploitation paradigm of human supremacy. There is the potential for counter narratives to change the way that humans speak about nonhuman's resistance and recognize their agency. For instance, *The Tiger* is the product of John Vaillant's (2010) extensive investigation into the events surrounding a poacher who shoots and injures a tiger only to be hunted down and killed by the same tiger in a seeming act of vengeance. Vaillant (2010) asks, "What should one call it when a tiger starts eating people … and injures itself demolishing man-made things? Is it rage? A loss of bearing? Or simply adaptation to a new order? Perhaps some things are best left unnamed" (p. 158). In contrast with the narratives that acknowledge the "human-like" attributes of nonhuman resistors while leaving firmly in place the separation of human and animal, Vaillant's account presents the tiger as not only unquestionably sentient, but the recognition of this directly calls into question the limits of the human subject. Vaillant's question—what we should call the moment when a tiger starts eating people—is rather a question of what we should call ourselves when normative definitions of the Human and the Animal cannot make sense of such an occurrence. This question serves better unanswered, just as Derrida (2008) ponders, realizing he is caught in the gaze of "the wholly other [we] call 'animal,'": "Who am I, therefore? Who is it that I am (following)? Whom should this be asked of if not of the other? And perhaps of the [animal] itself?" (p. 6). Simply accounting for this resistance does not necessarily problematize the rules of domination that speciesism upholds. I have illustrated this issue through showing how the narratives that appear in the wider discourse on nonhuman resistance are problematic and speciesist, positioning real, living individual animals as "absent referents"

for human values. Through various distancing strategies, the actions of nonhumans who resist, and those who appear not to, are neutralized and co-opted into certain "régime[s] of truth" (Foucault, 1980, p. 131) that deny the animals their agency and seek to continually justify their exploitation.

Of course, there are limitations to this project's research. The limitation of my analysis of media sources is that the majority of media outlets are owned by a small group of companies (Albarran, 2013; Harvey & Law, 2005). As a result, media sources within these companies put forth similar content, which is in turn replicated, altered, and republished under the guises of various sources. This media oligopoly can result in a lack of diverse viewpoints. Further, these companies are bound by the interest of government, sponsorships, and advertisers. Commentary from activist groups illustrates varied perspectives as they more openly engage with the idea of nonhumans as agents. While outside the scope of this project, further avenues for research include a comparative analysis of animal rights activist groups representation of these cases. To further explore the efficacy of a discursive shift in making change for nonhumans, researching the direct, first hand responses of individuals would offer a perspective of animal resistance not bound by corporate interest. Additionally, despite efforts to remain distinctly anthropocentric, this research is limited by the fact that it arises from a field of study, the Humanities, that is largely founded in humanist thought. As CAS scholar Jodey Castricano (2008) warns, despite seeking to problematize the "Western, humanist tradition," contemporary critical inquiry often sustains the very "politics of exclusion" it intends to question (p. ii). Shuffling certain species or individual animals across a supposed "line of moral considerability" (Kim, 2001, p. 329) unfortunately reorganizes and extends a speciesist logic of moral disqualification. This "right to decide who gets sovereign rights and what that sovereignty looks like" (Wadiwel, 2015, p. 294)

intersects with racist, sexist, ableist, and colonialist logics of domination in heterogeneous, yet mutually reinforcing ways, particularly through the processes of infra-humanization, dehumanization, and objectification (Boccato et al., 2007; Gervais et al., 2013; Vaes et al., 2012). As W. Brown (2000) states, "rights almost always serve as mitigation ... they vanquish neither the regime nor the mechanisms of reproduction" (p. 231). Instead, rights "soften" the effects of domination rather than challenging them (W. Brown, 2000, p. 231). We can clearly see this softening occurring in terms of so-called animal welfare (Cole, 2011; Pedersen & Stanescu, 2014), conservation (Chrulew, 2011), and even "happy meat" (C. Taylor, 2013).

Overall, Wadiwel (2015) has taken on one of very few long-standing, dedicated efforts to examine nonhuman resistance with the unquestionable recognition of their agency at the forefront, particularly through lenses of biopolitics and sovereignty. In doing so, Wadiwel offers a substantial, CAS-aligned foundation for what we might start referring to collectively as Animal Resistance Studies, given the now increasing collection of scholarship dedicated to the topic.[44] It is time to start looking at this collection as constituting a field and begin reflecting critically on the work that is being done. This discussion is time sensitive. Foucault (1978/1990) proposes that where power is, so too is there resistance. However, nonhuman resistance could very well be finite—at the present time, we are looking towards a future in which nonhumans may be brought into existence without the capacity to resist, to experience emotion, or even be conscious.

It is in this regard, beyond this project's analytical aspirations, I ultimately assert that the

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[44] In 2019, the European Association for Critical Animal Studies (EACAS), along with the Centre for Animal Ethics and the Critical Communication Research Group of the Department of Communication at Pompeu Fabra University in Barcelona, held the 6th EACAS Conference with the theme "Rethinking revolution: nonhuman animals, antispeciesism, and power" (Almiron et al., 2019). Both Colling (2013) and Bear and Holloway (2019) also refer to "animal resistance studies" in relation to this growing scholarly field.

recognition of nonhuman resistance is pertinent to CAS's support of economic sabotage, civil disobedience, and direct action (Best, 2009, p. 12). In tandem with scholarship that seeks to trouble the status quo and problematize the speciesist dismissal of nonhuman agency, I call to activists and scholars alike to begin exploring avenues of direct action beyond those that seek to be the "voice for the voiceless" (S. Taylor, 2017, p. 62) and to protect so-called "defenceless" animals. Just as resistance is subdued and limited through various strategies, activists would be well served to reflect on the strategies for halting or even reversing these constraints imposed on animals. It is not my intention to convince speciesists that the lives of nonhumans have value in their own right and deserve not to be killed, held captive, and exploited without moral concern. I invoke Sunaura Taylor's (2017) comments once again:

> [Some] suggest that animals are not telling us what they want. … [However] "the preferably unheard" is far more apt. Animals consistently voice preferences and ask for freedom. They speak to us every day when they cry out in pain or try to move away from … Animals tell us constantly that they want out of their cages, that they want to be reunited with their families, or that they don't want to walk down the kill chute. Animals express themselves all the time, and many of us know it. If we didn't, [spaces] would not be designed to constrain any choices an animal might have. We deliberately have to choose not to hear [them]. (p. 62)

Beyond what I have shown here, to recognize the atrocities committed against nonhumans in the name of human pleasure simply requires that one look and listen to the animals.

I want to make clear that while ending the oppression of nonhuman animals is at the heart of this project, I do not speak apolitically, nor do I hold my work in abeyance from the inherent intersectionality of the question of the animal. The epistemic denial of agency that underpins the

exploitation of nonhumans is a "logic of domination" (Warren, 1994, p. 269) that "intersects with and helps maintain" (N. Taylor & Twine, 2014, p. 4) other categories of difference, such as gender, race, ability, sexuality, and class, historically wielded against those humans relegated to the status of less-than-human (Gruen, 1996; Nibert, 2002, 2013; Spiegel, 1996). As Ecofeminist Val Plumwood (1993/2003) says, this denial of agency, a practice of "instrumentalisation" where the "other's agency is overridden by the user's own in the process of bringing [then] into use," clearly extends beyond species lines (p. 142). This is not to say that the exploitation of nonhumans and humans is comparable, but rather that the logics of domination are historically intersecting, linked in a common practice of Othering and moral disqualification. On a global scale, animal exploitation results in, and requires, the exploitation of human workers, particularly people of colour, working migrants, and those in poverty, in addition to large scale environmental degradation, particularly in low-income countries.

The question of who can resist or what it must look like, as many scholars are concerned with, is not apolitical theorizing. It cannot be overlooked that the resistance of animals is actively sought out and repressed through the language and technologies of their exploitation, practices with historical roles in the domination of humans (Spiegel, 1996). To this end, this thesis maintains that this question of resistance is not "strictly animal interest politics" (Best et al., 2007, p. 2), and thus includes nonhumans as "co-contributors" in the fight for not only their liberation, but for the "total reduction in oppression, across species lines" (Allen & von Essen, 2018, p. 4). The discourse of animality functions unceasingly to reinstate the sacrosanct human-animal divide and is the same pool drawn from when humans are made to be less-than-human. Total liberation must take into seriously the denial of nonhuman agency and the question of nonhuman resistance as being intersectional. The animalization of humans, removal of their

agency, and denial of their capacity to resist domination requires that animals be subject to the same. Therefore, to halt the subjugation of those treated as less-than-human requires the complete dissolution of human supremacy, which, as I have shown, may rest in the recognition that animals resist, sometimes violently, despite what we are led to believe.

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